



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto

INTEGRUOTOS KOMUNIKACIJOS PROGRAMOS

(valstybinis kodas 621P20002)

VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT OF

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS

(state code 612P20002)

STUDY PROGRAMME

at Vytautas Magnus University

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Integruota komunikacija</i>
Valstybinis kodas	621P20002
Studijų sritis	socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	viešieji ryšiai
Studijų programos rūšis	magistrantūros
Studijų pakopa	antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinės (1,5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	90
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Viešųjų ryšių magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2006-03-06

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Integrated Communications</i>
State code	621P20002
Study area	Social Sciences
Study field	Public Relations
Kind of the study programme	Master's
Cycle of studies	Second
Study mode (length in years)	Full Time (1,5)
Scope of the study programme in credits	90
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master in Public Relations
Date of registration of the study programme	2006-03-06

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PREFACE

Our Assessment Team was appointed by The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education to conduct an Evaluation of the study programme Integrated Communications (621P20002). In conducting our evaluation of the study programme, the Assessment Team have applied the methodological guidelines developed by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education.

The following analysis is based on the self-evaluation report, plus site visits and interviews with relevant stakeholders conducted in Kaunas on the campus of Vytautas Magnus University on November 22, 2012.

Team members found the schedule of meetings to be valuable and as efficiently scheduled as possible, to make maximum use of the limited time the team had to conduct its work. University administrators, teaching staff, students, alumni, employers and other stakeholders were invariably gracious and helpful in answering questions from team members.

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

I. INTRODUCTION

The Integrated Communications MA at Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) has been offered since 2006 by the Department of Public Communications. This department, which has a rich history of communication and journalism studies, is one of the leading journalism, media, and communication schools in the Baltic States. VMU is a classical university of Liberal Arts based on common beliefs and values of freedom, openness, and dialogue. Its Liberal Arts education profile, with a core emphasis on studying broadly themed subjects, ensures that studies offered at VMU are not narrow, or restricted to specialty pre-defined subjects. In contrast, VMU aims at providing its students with a thorough knowledge and broad (interdisciplinary) understanding of the selected study field.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The Integrated Communications MA at Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) is a fairly new programme (2006) that focuses on providing — according to the self-assessment report (SAR) — “future professionals with the integrated knowledge of communications and public relations, adequate skills and tools in communication activities at the Lithuanian and international organizations”. In relation to this, integrated communication is in the SAR described as “as substantive and in the process of communication consolidated activities, such as: project and information management, public relations, relations with the media, marketing communication, online communication, audience and consumer research, change management”.

This entails acquiring the competences “to design, analyze, evaluate, coordinate and influence various communication activities, to create and maintain accurate, consistent and effective communication internally and externally”. The learning goals, which are publicly available, are broadly divided between generic and specific. The generic goals are focused on “competences to integrate theoretical, empirical and methodological knowledge acquired during the studies, and demonstrate strong ethical perspective in integrated communications and public relations while the specific goals are described as to “plan, manage and evaluate communications and public relations products and campaigns meeting high professional standards in a wide range of activities”. Thus, while the generic goals are focused on understanding the broader communicational context as well as the relevant theoretical and methodological elements necessary to study and analyse these, the specific goals are more focused on applying this broader knowledge to specific communicational needs.

The two broad categories of goals are broken down into smaller units, e.g. the specific competence to “[d]esign and implement hands-on field-based integrated communications campaign and public relations plan, while applying problem solving approach”. These nine competences (five generic and four specific) are related to the mandatory and elective courses (including the thesis) in a table (annex 5, SAR). The study programme aims are also listed in individual course outlines in which they are broken into course outcomes and evaluation criteria.

The goals seem well-defined and based in contemporary and international research, the needs defined by the ministry as well as the needs of the labour market. Although the categories of generic and specific make good sense on an overall descriptive level, it is not entirely clear on what basis this distinction is

made with regard to the more detailed goals. Why, for instance, is the ability to “[d]emonstrate effective communication skills across cultures” a generic competence while the ability to “[a]pply research, measurement and evaluation methods and tools to provide grounded evidence of the success or failure of integrated communications campaigns” classified as specific?

While there seems to be a broad consistency between learning outcomes and the courses offered, as showed in the table in annex 5 of the SAR, it is not entirely clear how the specific courses — mandatory and elective — contribute to a planned layering and progression of competences. What is the logic behind the development of learning outcomes? It is, to use the programme’s own prefix, not entirely clear how the various goals are integrated. In relation to this, one may wonder why only one specific programme goal (out of four) is listed under the master thesis. And why this particular one (the ability to “[a]pply research, measurement and evaluation methods”) and not 2.4, which precisely specifies the ability to “[i]ntegrate different techniques, tools and methods in corporate and institutional communication”?

In general, a thought worth considering is the fact that the two MA programmes offered by VMU (Journalism and Media Analysis, and Integrated Communications) could be profiled better. The two programmes seem to attract the same students and the students, after graduation, seem to work in very similar jobs. There is space for a differentiation of the two programmes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

The programme is directed towards a clear goal and has a range of defined learning outcomes, that are divided between generic and specific. These learning outcomes are — furthermore — stated in each individual course outline in which they are broken into goals linked to the specific course.

Weaknesses

While the learning outcomes are clearly stated they are also relatively broad. It is, furthermore, difficult to see how the different learning goals relate to each other and how (or whether) they are integrated into a progression that culminates in the master thesis.

2. Curriculum design

The design of the programme and its parts live up to the legal regulations set by the Lithuanian state as well as the requirements for a content provided as part of a second cycle degree. The programme volume is 90 ECTS and consists of “7 obligatory courses, which are research oriented and amount to 42 ECTS credits; 3 elective courses with 18 ECTS credits; 30 ECTS credits are assigned the final thesis writing (6 ECTS for Research Paper Writing and 24 ECTS for Master Thesis)”. Apart from the thesis all courses count 6 ECTS. In the first semester, students have to take one elective (from a list of four choices) and two in the second semester (also from a list of four choices).

In terms of content, the programme is broadly split up between the first semester, which consists of broad introductory courses, and the second semester, which focuses more specifically on different aspects of corporate communication (semester 2) and, finally, the master thesis (semester 3), which aims to combine these two broad areas into a concrete research project. The compulsory courses in the first semester consist of introductions to research methodology and communication policy, as well as to some of the elements, themes and thinkers of communication theory (i.e. from Plato over Pierce to the Frankfurt School and Habermas) and social theory (i.e. Marx, Veblen and Bourdieu). The elective courses are generally less wide in their foci. The compulsory courses of the second semester consist of a course on

integrated PR, one on organizational communication and one on writing research papers. The elective courses all deal with communication in specific contexts (political, international and intercultural, marketing and crises). An internship is integrated into the course Project Management at the beginning of the third semester. It is not entirely clear, however, what the requirements are of the internship (e.g. length and type of organisation).

The overall logic of progressing from general to more specific courses seems well intended and ambitious. And, the aim of the thesis to bring these two elements together in a concrete research project is logical. The content and methods in the different courses seem in overall terms consistent with the level and type of the programme and there does not seem to be any repetition and/or overlap between the individual courses, apart perhaps between integrated PR strategies (compulsory, second semester) and integrated market communication (elective, second semester). The introductory, compulsory theory courses of the first semester seem very general and thus rather far from the theme of the programme. That very few master theses referred to material (thinkers) from these courses seems somewhat telling. With regard to electives, the range is relatively narrow and the programme could arguably benefit from more and more focused electives.

Following this, as well as the discussion of learning outcomes above, one could have wished for a more elaborate discussion of the cumulation and coherence of the specific courses. Without such an elaboration, the curriculum seems more like a list of parallel courses than a tightly designed study programme. And, linked to this, what is the logic behind dividing the entire curriculum into slots of 6 ECTS? This signals that all subjects are of equal importance but is that really the case?

While the notion of “integrated communications” is specified in the SAR, it is not entirely clear how the “integrated” links up with the specific courses and, not least, with the coherence of the degree. There is a course in the second semester called “Integrated PR”. It would have helped, however, with a more thorough discussion of whether, and if so, how the notion of “integrated communication” is thematized in the specific courses, as well as to what degree this theme is something that connects the courses. This is especially the case with the progression from the first to the second semester where it seems that the task of combining the very broad introductory courses to the specific field of PR is left to the student. Linked to this, one may question the efficacy of having such a distance between some of the very broad elements of the first semester and the more focused elements of the second semester. Especially since this is a relatively short and supposedly focused MA. In relation to the generality of the introductory courses, one may also question whether a research methodology course belongs to the MA level.

Main strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

The design of the programme is easy to follow in its semester division between general (introductory) courses, courses focused on aspects of corporate communication and — finally — the master thesis. The different courses are well-described in terms of outcomes, materials and exams.

Weaknesses

While the different courses are well-described there is less documentation for how the various courses are thought in relation to each other and their order and weight. As such the programme appears more as a list of courses than a tightly defined degree. Linked to this, a number of the introductory courses could benefit from being more focused on aspects linked to the theme of the programme. In addition to that, the practical training (i.e. internships) are not described in relation to the curriculum. One might wonder whether it is justified that all course volumes are standardised at 6 ECTS.

3. Teaching staff

The teaching staff meets the legal requirements of the Lithuanian state as well as the internal requirements set by VMU. Following these, the staff is monitored on an annual basis with regard to a whole range of activities (publishing, membership of editorial boards, network-building, curriculum development, participation in professional seminars and trainings, etc.). Every five years “full attestation of teachers and researchers takes place ... and is performed by the Attestation Committee formed by the VMU Senate. This continuous monitoring is accompanied by various offers through which the staff can develop. A majority of the courses (80%) is taught by full-time research staff who teaches seminars in relation to their research interests. Most teachers are active in research and publish both in Lithuania and internationally as well as participate in a number of international projects, associations and conferences. The staff, who teach applied subjects all have “working experience [of] no less than 3 years well corresponding to the field of subject taught”.

As there is a continuous movement of staff up the academic career ladder, there is a gradual need for and influx of junior researchers, who -according to the SAR- are hired through an “Open Competition for Academic Staff that is announced by VMU with requirements and information on competition details announced through the university as well as the Research Council of Lithuania websites”. In order to assure the new knowledge that new staff members bring, there has been an effort to get these to co-teach with staff who have been employed for a number of years. In relation to this it is stated that a “particular feature of the program is that most of the courses are delivered by collaborative teaching initiatives. This has been introduced in 2008 to give an opportunity for students to gain more up-to-date knowledge and skills from different experts.” This means that the “ratio of teachers and students in lectures and seminars of the program can vary from 10 to 30”. Having several teachers for one course is a luxury not often feasible for Master programmes, but the same phenomenon can also cause confusion among students, if the cooperation is not perfect. Some students mentioned this problem.

According to the SAR, the “total teacher’s workload is 36 hours per week, which includes teaching hours, scientific research and methodical work. In average, the teaching load encompasses 12-18 hours per week. The remaining workload is planned by the teacher himself/herself and is distributed between academic writing, research work, preparation of teaching materials, etc.”

The quality and conditions of the teaching and research staff are very satisfactory in relation to the study programme, its learning outcomes as well as the number of students. There is, in addition, a good infrastructure for the continuous improvement of the quality of the teaching and research delivered, as well as for the links between research and teaching. Due to the low ratio between teachers and students there is ample opportunities for face-to-face interactions, and this was also confirmed at the visit, where many students praised the accessibility of the professors.

Main strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

A majority of the courses in the programme are taught by active researchers and/or teachers with relevant practical experiences. The university monitors the activities of the staff on a continuous basis, and, in relation to this, offers a range of activities to improve the quality of the staff. The quality of the teaching staff is high. Conditions for research are adequate.

Weaknesses

While most of the staff have strong research credentials it should be pointed out that some of these conduct research that is somewhat removed from aspects of integrated communications.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The campus of VMU is situated in town with easy access to various amenities (cafes, shops etc.). The department of Public Communications is located in the main building where the administrative offices are located very close to lecture halls and teaching rooms — as well as the university newspaper, tv and radio. Most of the teaching rooms have the appropriate AV equipment as well as wi-fi access.

The university library is well-stocked, and, furthermore, in the process of expanding its already significant access to journals publishing the latest research in the relevant areas. In addition to that, the teachers at the department have published material tailored to the Lithuanian context. Finally, the library is just about to move to a new building. In terms of practical training the students have access to various equipment as well as computers with a range of relevant software. Also, as the self-assessment reports points out, the students of this programme have access to equipment at other departments.

The location and small distance between the department secretariat and teaching rooms together make up a good learning environment. There seems ample room for both teaching and student work outside the class room. In terms of facilities for practical work, the facilities and equipment seemed adequate but also somewhat in need of improvement in terms of the size of rooms and the amount of equipment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

A central location of the department as well as a close and conducive vicinity between administration, teaching rooms and other learning facilities. There are satisfactory premises for lecturing, group work, and individual problem-solving at the library.

Weaknesses

The equipment for various types of production could be improved.

5. Study process and students' performance assessment

The intake of students has remained relatively stable since 2007/8 at a relatively low level: between 14 and 19 students. The admission criteria are made up of grades from the students' BA and a mixture of CV, interview and other aspects. The student progression and graduation is closely monitored and the drop-out rate for the period covered by the self-assessment report is app. 8.5%. Related to this there is a range of different types of student support and counselling including career consultations and the self-assessment report states that "survey results indicate, over 90% of the respondents are employed; majority of them (61%) works in different corporate, public institutions, non-governmental organizations as PR officers, communication managers or project managers in PR companies. Their job positions also include

academic institutions, ministries, local, national and international public institutions.” While studying, students are encouraged to and do engage in a range of extra-curricular activities.

In relation to feedback from the students, close relations between teachers and students secure that students can voice their concerns at a regular but informal basis. In addition to that surveys are made from graduates from the programme. According to the one enclosed with the self-assessment report, there is a fairly high level of graduate satisfaction although it is also clear that many students would prefer a stronger focus on practical skills training. Yet, employers also emphasised that what characterised the candidates from this programme was their flexibility and ability to learn.

With regard to the assessment of student work, each course outline lists the evaluation criteria, and the assessment methods generally consist of different proportions of written (project) work, mid-term and final exams. The final exam for thesis includes an oral presentation and discussion. The procedure for tackling plagiarism is briefly outlined as giving a specific mark with the possibility of appealing.

In terms of mobility, there is a range of possibilities through exchange programmes and seminars and a relatively high number of students make use of these. There is also a fair amount of incoming exchange and full-degree students.

The monitoring of, and responsiveness to student work and progression at this programme assures a relatively high level of student satisfaction. This is no doubt partly ensured by a range of student support as well as the low teacher-student ratio.

With regard to admission, it is not clear which BA degrees give access to the programme. And while it is laudable that relevant abilities and experiences other than grades are given weight in relation to admission, it is not clear how the various non-grade aspects are transformed into quantitative measures that can be used in the mathematical formula listed and described in the self-assessment report in paragraph 94.

The means of assessment of student work is relatively transparent so that students know what is expected of them. With regard to the thesis, however, the formal requirements were less clear. In the course outline it is not described in any detail what is expected at the oral presentation and how much this counts towards the final grade. None of the students asked about this were able to answer this question. In addition to this, it was unclear how the committee is put together and with how much weight each participant speaks.

The methods and strategies to tackle plagiarism are described in a very rudimentary fashion. Firstly, any preventive measures were not presented and, secondly, it seems odd that students cheating are given a (very negative) mark only, rather than having his/her work rejected completely, plus further sanctions. The formal procedures for appeal are, in addition, not described.

Main strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

The monitoring of student progress is thorough and responsive in both a formal and informal fashion. The first in terms of registration and surveys, the latter through close teacher-student relations. In addition to this, each course has a clear description of the assessment criteria and exam methods. The mid-term assessment is a good arrangement

Weaknesses

There are no bridging courses, which would help to reconcile the heterogeneous background of the students. Assessment criteria for individual courses are not always clear. With respect to the master thesis: it is unclear what the requirements for the oral presentations are and how much this counts towards the final grade. Also, the roles of the participants on the evaluation committee are not clear. The procedures regarding plagiarism are not wholly transparent. It is not clear how dropout percentages are calculated.

6. Programme management

The various responsibilities in relation to the management and quality assurance of the programme are clearly allocated: the Study Programme Committee (SPC) monitors the programme, suggests changes to content and staffing. The faculty council oversees this and approves changes decided in the Study Programme Committee. Finally, the administration of the department takes care of the daily running of the programme. The SPC is put together to assure representation from both students and social partners. On top of, or next to this, there was (in 2011) established a structurally independent Center for Quality and Innovations at VMU. The planning, quality control and other study-related activities are documented publicly in various ways, e.g. on the university website.

Surveys are conducted in order to monitor teaching as well as alumni. In addition to this, there is a continuous connection between the teachers and management of the programme and alumni in the surrounding community. In more informal terms, there seems to be an open culture of communication, both between teachers, and between teachers and students.

The structure of management of the programme is clear and systematic; and the adding of a structurally independent quality control unit is certainly a strength. There seems, on top of this, a culture in which various issues are discussed on an informal basis between teachers and students and between different levels of management. Having said that, it also seems that the formal level of the study programme committee is somewhat removed from the daily running of the programme. The committee does not have a regular schedule of meetings and seemingly no formal procedure for the setting of agendas and the taking and distribution of minutes. Also, the procedures for the placement and replacement of members on the committee are not transparent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

The structure of management of the programme is clear and systematic and with a strong focus on quality control. Also, it seems that the department and faculty is characterised by a culture in which there is little distance between students and teachers as well as between the various levels of management. Finally, the high quality of the SAR, as well as the organisation and the structure of the visit, attest to a very competent management as and a well-run department.

Weaknesses

While the structure seems clear and laudable, there is also a sense in which it seems that the open culture of communication at the department at times replaces and thus make less transparent the formal structures of management. Regular market monitoring is lacking. There is space for a differentiation of the two master's programmes (Integrated Communications versus Journalism and Media Analysis).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. While the learning outcomes are well defined, more focus should be given to how the various learning outcomes are related and how they are layered in order to cumulate to an integrated whole.
- 3.2. The procedures for the Study Program Committee need to be more systematic and transparent.
- 3.3. It is recommended to monitor students coming from different academic backgrounds, and, in case of differences in study performance, it is advised to require them to take bridging courses.
- 3.4. The design of the curriculum, the order and content should be considered with respect to making a more focused and integrated programme. This could include a break-up of the strong division between the first and second semester in order to integrate various theories and practical skills in a more thorough way. And, linked to this, the foci of some of the introductory courses of the first semester ought to be rethought in order to diminish the distance between the introduced broad theories and the main theme of the programme.
- 3.5. More emphasis ought to be given to the integration of the practical elements of the programme. This could be a more formal procedure for integrating internships into courses as well as a more systematic integration of social partners into the teaching and management. There is seemingly a willingness among the social partners to be more connected to programme and this ought to be considered — also in addition to internships.
- 3.6. Assessment criteria for individual courses should be made more explicit. Also, the plagiarism procedures need to be rethought.
- 3.7. The programme should make more use of its social partners, especially because they seem to be willing, even eager, to cooperate. Market surveys are recommended.
- 3.8. With its qualified teaching staff and two high-quality MA programmes, the department should consider starting a PhD programme in the field of communication and media studies.

IV. SUMMARY

The Integrated Communications Master at VMU is a 90 ECTS, three-semester programme that aims to give candidates a mix of generic and specific competences to be utilised in the broader field of corporate communication. The programme, its students, teachers and management came across as a community with a shared focus as well as ability and willingness to adjust.

Programme aims and learning outcomes The overall aims and learning outcomes are well-defined and based on contemporary discussions and findings in the international research field within corporate communication. The learning outcomes, as well as their more specific manifestations in each course, were well-described and accessible. One could, however, have wished for a more elaborate discussion of the interlinkages between the various learning outcomes as well as their progression through the programme.

In addition to this programme, the department offers another MA programme. Both programmes focus on aspects of communication and have the same teaching staff. According to the given documentation, they also tend to attract the same students, who, after graduation, enter the same type of jobs. There is space for a differentiation of the two programme profiles.

Curriculum design. The logic of the curriculum design is structurally clear and with a visible progression from general to more specific and applied. There is a good balance between compulsory and elective courses. The overall design does, however, also seem somewhat rigid in its separation between the foci of the semesters; a closer integration of general and topical theory as well as practical elements throughout the three semesters might produce a more integrated degree. Finally, the division of all courses (except the master thesis) into blocks of 6 ECTS might also benefit from being revisited with regard to what each course adds towards a more integrated whole.

Teaching staff. The quality and conditions of the teaching and research staff are very adequate in relation to the study programme, its learning outcomes as well as the number of students. The teaching staff is made up of experienced and active researchers, who participate in seminars and conferences in both Lithuania and internationally. There is a good infrastructure for the continuous improvement of the quality of the teaching and research delivered as well as for the links between research and teaching. A majority of courses are taught by full-time lecturers and those teaching the more professional subjects all have ample and relevant experiences. Part-time teachers are not fully integrated into the programme.

Facilities and learning outcomes. The facilities and learning resources of the programme together make up an environment that is very conducive to learning. The low teacher-student ratio coupled with close vicinity between administration, commons room and teaching rooms assure that there is a daily interaction between teachers and students. The library is well-equipped but there have been problems with literature.

Study process and assessment. The learning atmosphere is supportive, although the criteria for assessing student performance on individual courses remain slightly unclear. However, students are heard regularly via feedback surveys and discussions in class. The mid-term assessment is a good arrangement.

The volume of credits for thesis work is good, but the proportions of the credits for the written report versus oral defence remain diffuse.

The successful completion of the programme might depend considerably on the educational background that is the field of BA studies. If a student has a BA degree in a totally different discipline, his/her chances to digest properly the demanding contextual dimensions might be a problem.

Programme management. The high quality of the self-assessment report as well as the organisation and the structure of the visit, attest to a very competent management and a well-run department. The programme management is transparent and very competent. The various responsibilities are clearly allocated and the system is characterised by a relatively small distance, which means that many issues are solved in an ongoing and informal fashion. This is a quality that is closely linked to the impression of a department that functions as a team focused on common goals. Such a tightly-knit culture could, however, be in need of a more structured implementation of the formal rules of governance. There is a strong focus on quality control. Market surveys, however, are not carried out regularly.

Linked to the integrated culture of the department, it should also be pointed out that the two programmes — integrated communications, and journalism and media analysis — are based on a

(partially) overlapping group of teachers, cater to the same students as well as to overlapping job types. A clearer distinction of these programmes could be considered.

All in all, the Integrated Communications master at VMU presents itself — both in the self-assessment report and in actual meetings — as a high-quality programme with high ambitions as well as the ability to develop in relation to a changing environment.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Integrated Communications* (state code – 621P20002) of Vytautas Magnus University is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	4
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	4
	Total:	20

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

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

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

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

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VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO ANTROSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
INTEGRUOTA KOMUNIKACIJA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 621P20002)
2013-02-06 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-48 IŠRAŠAS

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

- 3.1. Nors numatomi studijų rezultatai gerai suformuluoti, reikėtų atkreipti didesnę dėmesį į tai, kaip susiję įvairūs studijų rezultatai ir kaip jie išdėstyti, kad sudarytų integruotą visumą.
- 3.2. Studijų programos komiteto procedūros turi būti sistemingesnės ir skaidresnės.
- 3.3. Rekomenduojama stebėti studentus su kitokiu įgytu išsilavinimu ir, pastebėjus mokymosi rezultatų skirtumą, įvesti privalomas išlyginamąsias studijas.
- 3.4. Reikėtų peržiūrėti programos sandarą, išdėstymą ir turinį, siekiant labiau sutelktos ir integruotos programos. Būtų galima ne taip griežtai atskirti pirmąjį ir antrąjį semestrus, siekiant visapusiškiau sujungti įvairius teorinius ir praktinius aspektus. Taip pat reikėtų pergalvoti kai kurių įvadinių pirmojo semestro dalykų tikslus, norint sumažinti atotrūkį tarp plačių teorinių ir pagrindinės programos tematikos..
- 3.5. Reikėtų labiau pabrėžti praktinių elementų integravimą į programą. Galėtų būti įvesta formalesnė praktikos integravimo į dalykus procedūra, taip pat socialiniai partneriai galėtų būti sistemingiau įtraukiami į dėstymą ir vadybą. Pastebimas socialinių partnerių noras labiau dalyvauti programoje ir jį reikėtų apsvarstyti kartu su praktikomis.
- 3.6. Atskirų dalykų ir baigiamųjų darbų vertinimo kriterijai turėtų būti aiškesni. Taip pat reikėtų peržiūrėti studentų darbų, kurie nustatomi kaip plagiatas, įvertinimo pažymiu tvarką.
- 3.7. Programa turėtų labiau pasitelkti socialinius partnerius, ypač dėl jų deklaruojamo noro ar netgi troškimo bendradarbiauti. Rekomenduojama atlikti rinkos tyrimus.
- 3.8. Turėdama kvalifikuotus dėstytojus ir vykdydama dvi aukštos kokybės magistrantūros studijų programas, katedra turėtų apsvarstyti galimybę įvesti komunikacijos ir medijų mokslo srities doktorantūros studijų programą.

IV. SANTRAUKA

VDU Integruotos komunikacijos magistrantūros studijų programa – tai 90 ECTS kreditų apimties, trijų semestrų trukmės programa, siekianti suteikti studijuojantiems bendrųjų ir specialiųjų gebėjimų, praversiančių platesnėje korporatyvinės komunikacijos srityje. Programa, jos studentai, dėstytojai ir vadovybė sudaro bendruomenę, turinčią bendrą tikslą, taip pat gebėjimą ir norą prisitaikyti.

Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai. Bendrieji tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai yra puikiai suformuluoti ir paremti šiuolaikinėmis diskusijomis ir tarptautinių korporatyvinės komunikacijos srities tyrimų rezultatais. Numatomi studijų rezultatai, kaip ir konkretnės jų išraiškos

kiekviename dalyke, puikiai aprašyti ir prieinami. Tačiau galėtų būti išsamiau aprašytos įvairių studijų rezultatų sąsajos ir jų kaita programoje.

Be šios programos, katedra vykdo dar vieną magistrantūros studijų programą. Abi programos sutelktos į komunikacijos aspektus ir jas dėsto tie patys dėstytojai. Remiantis pateiktais dokumentais, jos pritraukia tuos pačius studentus, kurie po baigimo įsidarbina to paties tipo darbuose. Reikėtų ieškoti galimybių atskirti abi programas.

Programos sandara. Struktūrinė programos sandara yra logiška ir aiški; akivaizdus perėjimas nuo bendrųjų prie specifinių ir taikomųjų dalykų. Privalomi ir pasirenkamieji dalykai puikiai subalansuoti. Vis dėlto programos sandarai trūksta lankstumo kalbant apie semestrų atskyrimą; glaudžiau integravus visų trijų semestrų bendrąją aktualią teoriją bei praktinius elementus, bus suteikiamas labiau integruotas laipsnis. Galiausiai, praverstų peržiūrėti visų dalykų (išskyrus magistro darbo rengimą) suskirstymą į blokus po 6 kreditus, atkreipiant dėmesį į kiekvieno dalyko indėlį į bendrą visumą.

Personalas. Dėstytojų ir tyrėjų kokybė ir sąlygos atitinka studijų programos poreikius, numatytus studijų rezultatus ir studentų skaičių. Dėstytojai yra patyrę ir aktyvūs tyrėjai, dalyvaujantys seminaruose ir konferencijose tiek Lietuvoje, tiek užsienyje. Infrastruktūra dėstytojų ir tyrimų kokybei nuolat didinti bei tyrimams su dėstytoju susieti yra gera. Daugelį dalykų dėsto etatiniai dėstytojai, o dėstantys labiau į profesiją orientuotus dalykus turi didelę ir naudingą patirtį. Kviesiniai dėstytojai nėra visiškai įsilieję į programą.

Materialieji ištekliai. Programos materialinė bazė ir metodiniai ištekliai kuria mokymuisi palankią aplinką. Nedidelis dėstytojų ir studentų skaičiaus santykis, nedideliu atstumu išdėstytos administracijos patalpos, bendrosios poilsio zonos ir auditorijos užtikrina kasdienę studentų ir dėstytojų sąveiką. Biblioteka puikiai įrengta, tačiau yra buvę problemų su literatūra.

Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas. Mokymosi aplinka yra palaikanti, nors atskirų dalykų studentų darbo vertinimo kriterijai išlieka šiek tiek neaiškūs. Vis dėlto reguliariai rengiamos studentų apklausos, jų nuomonė išklausa diskusijų užsiėmimuose metu. Tarpinis vertinimas yra puiki priemonė.

Baigiamojo darbo apimtis gera, tačiau kreditų už rašto darbą ir žodinį gynimą santykis netinkamas. Vadovų vienam baigiamajam darbui skaičius – 7–9 katedros dėstytojai, turintys daktaro laipsnį, yra įspūdingas.

Sėkmingas programos baigimas gali labai priklausyti nuo ankstesnio išsilavinimo, t. y. bakalauro studijų srities. Jei studentas įgijęs visiškai skirtingos disciplinos bakalauro laipsnį, jo(s) galimybės tinkamai įsisavinti daug laiko ir pastangų reikalaujančius kontekstinius aspektus gali būti problematiškos.

Programos vadyba. Aukšta savianalizės suvestinės kokybė, taip pat vizito organizavimas ir struktūra liudija labai kompetentingą vadybą ir puikiai dirbančią katedrą. Programos vadyba skaidri ir labai kompetentinga. Atsakomybė aiškiai paskirstyta, o sistema santykinai nelabai oficiali, – tai reiškia, kad daugelis klausimų sprendžiami nedelsiant ir neoficialiai. Ši savybė sudaro įspūdį, kad katedra veikia kaip bendrų tikslų vienijama komanda. Vis dėlto tokiai glaudžiai kultūrai gali prireikti labiau struktūruoto formalių vadybos taisyklių įgyvendinimo. Didelis dėmesys skiriamas kokybės kontrolei. Tačiau rinkos tyrimai atliekami nereguliariai.

Kalbant apie integruotą katedros kultūrą, reikėtų paminėti, kad abi programos – Integruota komunikacija ir Žurnalistika ir medijų analizė – remiasi tais pačiais dėstytojais, yra skirtos tiems patiems studentams bei orientuotos į tą patį darbo pobūdį. Reikėtų apsvarstyti aiškesnį šių programų atskyrimą.

Apskritai, VDU Integruotos komunikacijos magistrantūros studijų programa tiek iš savianalizės suvestinės, tiek iš realių vizitų į universitetą sudaro aukštos kokybės programos su dideliais siekais ir gebėjimu tobulėti atsižvelgiant į besikeičiančias aplinkybes įspūdį.

IV. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Vytauto Didžiojo studijų programa *Intergruota komunikacija* (valstybinis kodas – 621P20002) vertinama teigiamai.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	4
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	4
	Total:	20

* 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

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