



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

**VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO PROGRAMOS
ŽURNALISTIKA (621P50001) VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF *JOURNALISM* (621P50001) STUDY PROGRAMME
AT VILNIUS UNIVERSITY**

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Žurnalistika</i>
Valstybinis kodas	621P50001
Studijų sritis	Socialinių mokslų
Studijų kryptis	Žurnalistika
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	1,5
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	90
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Žurnalistikos magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2007-02-19, ISAK-225

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Journalism</i>
State code	621P50001
Study area	Social Sciences
Study field	Journalism
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	Second
Study mode (length in years)	1,5
Volume of the study programme in credits	90
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of Journalism
Date of registration of the study programme	19-02-2007, ISAK-225

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I. INTRODUCTION

The master degree study programme in Journalism is provided by the Institute of Journalism (IoJ) at Vilnius University (VU). IoJ belongs to the Faculty of Communication (FoC) at VU. The staff and research in IoJ are managed by the Director and the highest authority of IoJ is the meeting of academic and science staff.

According to its own Strategic Development Plan 2009-2013, FoC is the leader in the field of communication and information studies in Lithuania. The strategic mission of IoJ is the "development of research of change in mass media and mass media system's functioning in the field of science, and in the field of study – implementation and development of competitive journalism study programmes".

To fulfil this task, IoJ is carrying out the research project entitled: "The Change of Lithuanian Mass Media in Convergence Situation" (2012–2016). The purpose of the research conducted at IoJ is to "analyse the changes of modern media, mass media and journalism related cutting edge technologies, changes in communication and information dissemination, and changes in public information". Since 2008 IoJ publishes research articles in the scientific journal Journalism Research (in Lithuanian).

IoJ provides two master degree study programmes: Journalism (full-time, 1.5 years) and Analytical Journalism (full-time, 2 years). In addition, IoJ supervises doctoral theses. In October 2013, there were seven students enrolled in the master programme Journalism. The programme was accredited in 2011 for three years. The revised programme started on 1st September 2013.

The re-modelling of the design of the Journalism MA programme has been influenced by several recent trends: (1) the number of students between 2009 and 2013 declined; (2) as of 2013 the programme is not eligible for state funding anymore; (3) the emergence of various other communication study programmes at other universities; (4) media organisations have suffered from the economic recession of 2009-2011; (5) tax break cuts have weakened the media institutions resources, resulting in lower pay for journalists and lower prestige for the journalistic profession.

The revised programme was modified in order to be convenient for students in terms of time schedules and by combining intensive classes with independent work. Since the programme is especially targeting those, who already work in the media sector, the number hours devoted to independent work and consultations was significantly increased, the number of contact hours was reduced, and the overall length of the programme was decreased (from 2 years to 1.5 years). Furthermore, the programme contents was reviewed and restructured in order to avoid the repetition of course contents and subjects.

Because of the restructuring of the programme, the study programme committee and lecturers have been concerned with a lot of organizational work preceding the implementation of the revised programme in autumn 2013. Reviewing the impact and consequences of the recent changes in the programme is expected to demand further attention in the upcoming period, in order to assure and maintain the coherence of the programme and to facilitate the coordination between staff members, students and social partners.

The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education appointed five members to form an external evaluation group to evaluate the second cycle study programme in Journalism at VU.

The group received the Self-Evaluation Reports (SER) in advance of the site visit. The evaluation of the programme followed the established practice and methodological recommendations by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education.

Before the site visit each team member prepared a preliminary report and notes on the basis of the SER and its annexes. The preliminary evaluation reports and comments were circulated to all team members electronically. The preliminary reports contained tentative findings, comments and questions intended to be asked to specific groups scheduled to meet with during the site visit.

The preparatory comments were topically divided among the team members following the structure and content of the evaluation report template, taking into account the individual experience and specialization of each team member.

The Evaluation Team (ET) visited the Journalism study programme of VU on 2nd April 2014. The ET met six relevant groups engaged in the study programme: Faculty administration (3 persons), SER groups (Ba and Ma, 8 persons), teaching staff (12 persons), students (18 Ba, 2 Ma students), graduates (9 Ba, 4 Ma students), social partners (7 persons). In all, the ET met in the meetings about 63 persons. The ET did not attend to any classes.

The ET visited the faculty and institute libraries, TV and radio studios, auditoria, VU central library and LNK television station. In the meeting room, students' BA and MA theses as well as the scientific journal of the Institute, Journalism Research, were accessible to the team.

After the meetings and site visit the team presented preliminary findings to the VU journalism community attended by four representatives of the administration and four teaching staff members. After the visit, the ET met for the final summary discussion attended by the evaluation coordinator of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education.

The ET would like to thank the Journalism study programme community of IoJ at VU for answering the team's questions and the Faculty of Communication for hosting and managing the visit.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The degree and professional qualification awarded at the end of the programme is Master in "Journalism". The aims of the programme are clearly outlined and based on an understanding of the research field of journalism studies. However, the aims and outcomes defined in the SER explicitly state to prepare "analysts of journalism", who are able to "critically evaluate", "understand", "can organise" or "provide" information, but in this definition in the SER there is no reference to, for instance, deepening journalistic skills or professional abilities. The main aim of the study programme apparently is to educate experts for wider tasks related to mass communication and the media sector as a whole rather than for professional journalism alone. The ET finds it striking that deeper knowledge and qualification of core journalistic skills are not mentioned explicitly in the programme aims. Other aims, such as analytical and theoretical skills, are more central currently than actual journalistic skills. If this focus is on purpose, it should be explicitly addressed and explained towards prospective students, also in light of the title of the programme (MA in "Journalism"). Furthermore, there seems to be more of an analytical focus, i.e. on theoretical reflection rather than on the training of practical journalistic skills. While this re-orientation is embedded in and in line with the target focus on students who already work in the media sector and thus have some professional experience already, the ET believes that this focus of the programme on theoretical reflection and beyond the journalistic profession alone should be communicated more clearly to prospective students.

The programme is research-led in that it focuses on critical analytical approaches to journalism and prepares students to build an understanding of contemporary media and communications industries, as well as develop some managerial and practice-based skills. The programme team

took advice from both professional journalists and trade organisations, which informed the shape and nature of the degree.

Overall, graduates of the programme are expected to perform research and practical tasks, like creative writing, creation of video, audio and multimedia content, and critical analysis of mass media content. Looking at the potential professions in the labour market after graduation, graduates are expected to be employed in the fields of research and management and there is an assumed demand in the field for "qualified journalists, editors, analysts". In this context, the ET deems it necessary for the study committee to provide some more detailed information for prospective students where such "analysts of journalism" exactly work, what is their exact labour market (also outside of academia and journalism), what are their core skills relevant to future employers and compared to other study programs offered by other academic institutions? Also, what is the relationship between the MA Journalism and the MA Analytical Journalism offered at IoJ, considering the aims, learning outcomes, course unit subjects and professional skills acquired by students? For prospective students to be able to make a more informed choice, more detailed and nuanced information should be provided.

Several new competencies were introduced into the revised programme: business knowledge (theories, research methods, abilities to apply), cognitive abilities (the analysis and evaluation of mass communication processes and content) and practical skills (performing research, creative production, media content critics).

The SER notes that the programme aims and learning outcomes may be subject to future amendments and updates due to changes in the media, labour market and educational system. This shows that the study committee works flexible and is open to meet the challenges of future external changes.

The academic learning outcomes of the programme are based on the requirements of the Bologna qualifications, the qualifications of the European higher education and the order of the ministry of Lithuania on Master study programmes.

The professional learning outcomes are based on the ethical codes of Lithuanian Journalists and Publishers and on the tasks and definitions of the Lithuanian Law on Public Information as well as on the principles of journalism competencies formulated by EJTA.

The aims and learning outcomes are based on the necessary legislative and regulative requirements as well as on relevant professional requirements. The curriculum design meets the requirements of the ministry.

As indicated earlier, and besides meeting formal and legal requirements, the ET believes that given its analytical and theoretical focus the study committee should be clearer about how the revised study programme design relates to public needs and the needs of the labour market and can these claims be backed up with any sort of data stemming from employers or other societal stakeholders?

The study programme has been significantly changed compared to the previous programme design. Contact hours (lectures and seminars) have been reduced, instead there are more consultation hours and more independent work modules. The rationale behind these changes is that the revised study programme aims to target students who are already employed and therefore the total scope of studies had to be compressed into three semesters (instead of four) and the general format of the programme had to be changed.

Given that students are awarded with a university MA level degree upon successful completion of the programme, the ET believes that the study committee needs to review on a continuous basis if the obtained qualifications are indeed sufficient and comparable to other MA programmes, especially due to the reduced amount of contact hours (lectures and seminars) and reduced overall length of the programme. Naturally, this very much depends on the nature and

success of the expanded independent work modules. While such modules are ideally suited for the application of existing knowledge, the ET believes the study committee needs to evaluate and later document that students in the programme still also acquire sufficient new knowledge and training under the supervision of experienced teachers.

Thus, while there are good reasons to expand the amount of independent work of students, it also means it needs to be monitored that this time is used efficiently by students and there is traceable study success as a result of these parts of the programme which later justify awarding a university-level MA degree.

Finally, there also should be an indication how these changes towards more independent work by students and more consultation hours influence the workload of lecturers. Regarding the students, the ET can assume the need for help and personal tutoring during the periods of independent work to rather grow than be reduced. Based on the student answers during the meeting at the site visit, the ET suggests revising and increasing the proportion of contact hours and reviewing if the number of consultation hours is adequate to provide sufficient help, supervision and personal tutoring, which is necessary to assure that the independent work of students really is successful and that the intended learning outcomes and programme aims are achieved. The ET also suggests to evaluate how and if the consultation hours are, in fact, effectively used by students.

Regarding the programme contents, professional qualifications and learning outcomes, the ET comes to the conclusion that the title of the study programme and the degree (MA in "Journalism") appears rather narrow and specific. Clearly, graduates can find work in a journalistic profession. However, as stated above, as becomes clear from the learning outcomes and programme aims, the programme is meant to prepare students for a wider variety of possible professions, reaching from management and research jobs to all sorts of other functions related to mass communication and the media sector as a whole. Rather than suggesting to change the programme title, the ET believes that this point should be addressed more explicitly, clearly and pro-actively in the description of the programme towards prospective students.

2. Curriculum design

The curriculum design meets legal requirements. Of 1 September 2013 the study programme consists of two course groups: 60 credits study field courses (modules) and 30 credits for the final MA thesis, thus 90 credits in total. All study field course units consist of six credits.

There has been a rationalisation of the modules to consolidate student learning across the subject areas and accommodate the revised credit system. Due to the compression of the study programme from previously four to now three semesters, the study committee had to make substantial amendments to the programme: the amount of credits per course unit was increased, courses were merged, and some modules were divided. Not surprisingly, the revised programme is more condensed and includes more independent work as opposed to contact hours, which is meant to increase the attractiveness of the programme to students who already work in practice. The ET comes to the conclusion, however, that the study programme committee needs to evaluate not only how students experience this change in structure and design of the programme but also how lecturers evaluate the impact of these changes on their own workload (in terms of necessary tutoring to support students in the independent work modules). Furthermore, the study committee needs to evaluate the overall success of the programme in actually achieving the intended learning outcomes and that these match the requirements to award a university-level MA degree.

The ET also believes it to be a premature (self-) assessment that the course unit subjects are no longer repetitive compared to the situation before. This should be subject to formal course and programme evaluations in which to include students as well as lecturers and can only be reliably

observed after the courses in question have been running for at least some (more) time. The ET stresses the specific need, in a situation like this in which a study programme has gone through significant changes, to formally evaluate the new (merged, updated or divided) course modules in order to see if the intended consequences behind these changes have been accomplished and if there are no unanticipated negative side effects (e.g., concerning workload, knowledge transfer, reaching intended learning outcomes, meeting student expectations etc.).

Regarding the content and methods of the different modules and how they are appropriate to achieve the intended learning outcomes, the ET is concerned about the considerable increase of independent work, especially in the 3rd semester in preparing the final thesis. While the ET understands the reasons behind this change, the question remains if the revised structure offers enough guidance and tutoring for students to really achieve the learning outcomes (largely by themselves). This issue becomes even more prevalent if one considers that the overall study programme has been shortened (to three semesters), students have different study backgrounds upon entry in to the programme, i.e. not necessarily in journalism or media and/or communication studies specifically, and might also differ with regard to their topical knowledge as well as in their social scientific research methodology skills and also in their knowledge regarding the specific methods relevant to journalism-specific research, which are essential for successfully completing the final thesis. All of these seem to be relevant reasons to stress the need for individual guidance, supervision and tutoring and/or more contact hours while the revised programme puts emphasis on the opposite: individual work modules. The number of consultation hours has been increased overall but at the expense of actual contact hours. In the last phase of the study programme the amount of consultation hours has been reduced notably (to 16 hours).

To effectively address this potential problem, rather than changing the revised programme structure at this point, the study committee should consider utilizing and implementing distance e-learning tools and accompanying self-study materials to better help and support students' efforts to finalize their MA thesis in the current structure. The ET stresses – again – the need to formally evaluate (rather than informally self-assess) the extent to which the problems outlined here pose actual challenges for the revised study programme in achieving its intended learning outcomes and assuring study success of students on a level that is appropriate for a university-level MA degree. The ET believes, as outlined, that the implementation of distance e-learning tools and implementation and actual and consistent use (across course modules and lecturers) of an online communication platform, connecting students with each other and students with lecturers, could be helpful in order to maintain and support the current, revised programme structure. However, this would and should not substitute the need for formal evaluation and to stay open and flexible to further adjust and change the revised programme structure in light of such evaluation results.

Regarding the scope of the programme, the revised and now more condensed programme focuses on people already employed and requires a high level of flexibility and commitment by students regarding their time schedules, discipline and time management to successfully complete the individual work modules, and financial resources to fund their studies themselves. However, if the programme meets the need of young professionals and is overall attractive, it may provide students a reasonable and an effective way for deeper qualification. The ET believes that the development of future enrolment numbers into the programme will be a key factor to judge, in the future, if there is sufficient demand for such a study programme and if it can be evaluated to be successful and relevant to continue. If enrolment numbers increase and programme evaluations (by students, lecturers and partners from practice) indicate overall satisfaction with the new, revised programme structure and contents, the compression of the programme and the redesigned curriculum with fewer courses (seminars or lectures) may well turn in to a strength and make the programme find its own position in the market with an unique contribution or selling-point to a specific target group of possible prospective students. While

this needs to be the goal, the extent to which it is accomplished needs to be subject to further evaluations and possible adjustments, as outlined above.

Due to the currently very low number of students in the programme, the selection of optional courses is very limited at the moment. Students expressed the wish to take alternative courses that meet their interests or professional preferences and this should be taken seriously into account as a possibility to compensate for the abovementioned shortcoming in the programme.

The status of research methodology and effects of journalistic production on public opinion in the curriculum remains unclear at this point. Both are referred to in the SER with regard to the program aims and learning outcomes but cannot easily be located in the curriculum. The content of the programme broadly reflects the recent achievements in communication and information science and technologies, however, the ET recommends a more pronounced international focus, by more explicitly focusing on global international trends in the field of journalism and media and communication, e.g. in the form of discussing relevant international case studies but also reflected in more international scientific literature as part of the course readings. There also is a need to continuously update the course contents and course reading lists with a focus on international developments, especially in such a dynamic environment as in journalism and media and communication studies. Furthermore, the specialist module on radio journalism stands out in the curriculum at this point, as there are not similar modules on television journalism or magazine journalism for example and there is no reason provided for this situation. Finally, the ET thinks it is important that students learn about processes of digitisation, convergence, and globalisation. Journalism is a rapidly changing profession, with the use of social media now being standard, and this should be reflected in the curriculum more explicitly.

3. Staff

The programme is taught by 10 teachers (2 professors, 4 associate professors and 4 lecturers). The staff meets the criteria the ministry set for university master programmes concerning the level and share of academic degrees of lecturers (80%). A majority of teachers (60%) should teach on their research and of all subjects the share of professors' teaching should be 20%. The staff exceeds these requirements in all categories and thus meets the legal requirements.

The qualifications of the teaching staff are adequate to achieve the intended learning outcomes of the study programme.

Taking into account the low number of students enrolled in the programme the number of teachers is currently adequate to ensure the learning outcomes. However, if enrollment numbers would rise in future years the situation would need to be re-assessed and more lecturers would need to be involved in the programme. In 2014 the Faculty plans to employ two current doctoral students who will defend their dissertations at the FoC which is positive.

Staff turnover has been minimal in recent years and the majority of full-time teachers have taught at the institution for over five years. In the autumn of 2013, a number of foreign teachers worked for the programme as teachers for the subject global communication. Students are generally positive about foreign teachers and their didactic approach which would differ from the approach of their regular teachers. Furthermore, it is reasonable that the programme "relies on the lecturers who have practical work experience in the media" for developing students' practical skills and students are very positive about these teachers from practice too. However, the current situation regarding lecturers from practice should be improved as they have only little initiatives to become involved in teaching. The ET regards the involvement of foreign guest lecturers as an important asset for the programme and encourages the study committee to further expand the network of international guest lecturers involved in the programme and look into further possibilities for lecturer exchanges with international partners so that their own teachers can broaden their international experience to the benefit of their students.

The staff appear to be well supported in professional development and are encouraged to enhance their skills as teachers and researchers. One issue that has arisen repeatedly during the site visit is payment for lecturers and overall budget constraints and there is a need to ensure early-career staff are not disadvantaged in their career development because of cost constraints.

VU has a Professional skills improvement centre and the staff is supposed to receive skill training every five years. VU provides a university lecturer guide book and holds teaching excellence training courses. In addition, the staff members participate in internships, exchange programmes, conferences and seminars to improve their professional skills. However, during the site visit it became obvious that the cooperation with the Professional skills improvement centre is under-utilized and could be made better use of. Lecturers should be actively encouraged to pick up offers of the centre rather than it depending mainly on individual initiative. Furthermore, there are practical obstacles which hold lecturers back to make use of the centre, such as conflicting time schedules. More active coordination work needs to be invested here in order to make better use of the training opportunities for lecturers and to the later benefit of students.

The ET also notes that while it is an advantage, on the one side that staff turnover has been minimal in recent years there also is a downside to it, i.e. lecturers need to keep up to date with the most recent technological, theoretical and didactical developments in the field and the profession. In this respect it is good that the department strives to hire some of their own, young PhD students as prospective teachers in the programme. Teachers and students alike both mentioned during the site visit to the ET that the quality of teaching, i.e. the didactic skills and approaches, of teachers vary greatly. The ET suggests to pro-actively pick up this point, define quality criteria for good teaching, train teachers accordingly and up to a joint level (e.g., documented by a basic teaching certificate required for all lecturers in the programme) and develop evaluation tools to document the success of these measures. The ET believes that this would not only directly respond to the perceived disparity in didactic skills among lecturers but also could become a quality sign and competitive advantage for the programme over competing programmes and towards prospective students and other interested stakeholders.

The ET stresses the need to develop and implement course evaluation tools which are used by all lecturers and centrally coordinated. It became clear from talking to lecturers at the site visit that currently many lecturers use their own evaluation tools and pay little or no attention to the official evaluation procedure that is in place. Apparently not all lecturers consider the current evaluation tool to be very suitable. The ET suggests to revise the current course evaluation procedure, together with teachers and student representatives, and – importantly – reflecting the intended learning outcomes that are particular to the respective programme, and implement this revised evaluation procedure in such a way that it is applied by all lecturers without exceptions and centrally coordinated by the department. There also should be visible results of these evaluations, from course adjustments to conversations with teachers who received very good or poor results. Good results could be rewarded, e.g. with an annual department-wide "Best Teaching" award (in addition to the faculty wide award) which would be motivating for lecturers and make quality in teaching more of a visible topic within the department itself, and poor results should be approached with a plan together with the teacher concerned how to improve the situation, e.g. by taking additional training courses in the Professional skills improvement centre.

Publishing academic articles and participating in conferences is part of lecturers' qualifications at VU. The qualifications of lecturers' positions are evaluated every five years. Faculty staff publishes articles in national and international scientific journals and presents research results at scientific conferences. According to the overview of publications and conference visits accessible to the ET, the staff members take active part in the national and international scientific community. The ET believes that installing a reward system, e.g. an internal award for the best academic article published in an international journal by a staff member of the institute, could be motivating for the staff to engage in academic publishing even more actively and move towards a more international orientation and focus in their own research and publication activities.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The journalism institutes have to struggle regarding the resources to keep the technological facilities at an appropriate level. Keeping the equipment of the radio, television, press and online studios up-to-date is time consuming and expensive. In the meeting, the team was assured that the digitalization of the radio studio would now be scheduled to be realized in autumn 2014 after it had already been planned to take place the last 5 years. The success of these efforts should be part of the next evaluation teams' assessment as an update of these facilities is indeed necessary to keep up with technological developments and enable students to practice their skills in an appropriate setting.

The Faculty administration noted that the university sees growth in journalism as a field of study. Presently an investment of five million Litass is scheduled in to the resources and equipment of journalism education. The programme has in the past relied on the provision of extra resources provided by external partners and related media industries to maintain and update the equipment to a satisfactory level.

The premises and rooms for journalistic practice are located in the same building near to each other, providing sufficient space for teaching and practicing journalistic skills needed for editorial work regarding television, radio and press. The Free Independent Channel LNK has provided digital TV equipment for training purposing. Those devices are essential for training with small-scale TV productions. National Radio is also providing its facilities and airtime for practical seminars.

Although the premises are old and difficult to simply replace with modern technological equipment the conditions are tolerable currently – but not more – both in their size and quality and this has also been noted as a concern by students who reported that they were often confronted with entirely different technological equipment in practice and then have to be trained again and learn how to use such more modern equipment and cannot really build or make use of their previously acquired knowledge.

The ET did not attend any classes but the lecture and seminar rooms seem to be adequate regarding the physical learning environment as well as the teaching equipment. The quality of facilities, devices and software are also adequate.

VU Central Library has group workrooms, media reading rooms and work places with computers for free use. The wireless Internet connection is accessible for students in all rooms as well as in the indoor recreation spaces and leisure areas.

Students have access to use rooms and computers for practical training in journalism. The arrangements for practice are adequate and easily available.

5. Study process and student assessment

BA graduates in other areas of social sciences than in communication and information sciences or in any other subject area who want to enroll in the programme must take an entrance exam. It remains an open question for the ET even after the site visit how exactly the practical journalistic skills from students with other BA degrees than Journalism are evaluated exactly as part of the admissions process and what formal criteria apply in such instance. The students enrolled in the programme currently, and who the ET talked to, seemed to have quite different backgrounds and were not immediately able to clarify how they experienced their transition into the programme in terms of topical, methodological and practical fit. The ET suggests that if students are accepted into the programme who do not fulfill the criteria of practical skills there need to be additional supplementary or preparatory courses provided for these students. It is important that future employers know what a graduate of this programme can or cannot do and there needs to be a

basic, common stock of knowledge and skills. Thus, to accomplish this the programme needs to make sure that students are not too different in the programme-relevant qualifications they possess once they graduate and this consideration should already play a role in the admissions phase and how to deal with initial differences in skills and backgrounds of applicants to the programme.

Due to the recent changes in the scope of the study programme, when the proportion of the independent work modules increased by 30 percent and the contact hours were reduced significantly and the overall length of the programme was reduced from four to three semesters, it remains unclear, how the learning outcomes are achieved. At least this needs to be documented as part of a formal evaluation procedure. It is important to mention, that not all teachers are familiar with the opportunities to use moodle – during the meeting with the teachers it turned out that only two of them are using this program. Considering the fact that this study programme is mainly designed for students who are already employed and the programme has been significantly reduced in terms of overall length and contact hours, it seems absolutely essential that there is an active and dynamic digital learning environment. This requires teachers to use such available tools to facilitate distance learning processes. The ET stresses there is a necessity to revise the tools and ways in which the learning outcomes can be achieved in light of these observations.

From the meetings with the teachers and students, the ET concludes that the Scientific Student Association is an active and helpful partner for the institute in encouraging students to participate in research activities. However from 2008 to 2012 only four master students published articles in the Faculty's journal "Žurnalistikos tyrimai" (Journalism Research). The ET advises to monitor the current situation by providing an incentive system to ensure a bigger involvement of students in research activities.

Although the students have a wide range of opportunities to study abroad, for example in Austria, Germany, Spain, Estonia, etc., only one student over the past five years went to Ukraine under the ERASMUS MUNDUS exchange program. Of course combining work and studies poses particular obstacles for this group of students to participate in such mobility programs. However, the ET suggests to more formally investigate the reasons why more students abstain from pursuing participating in such initiatives with the goal to then find ways and possibilities to increase the number of students studying abroad, e.g. by allowing for shorter exchanges or working together with employers to allow for students to combine their thesis work with a stay abroad on a topic relevant, and of use, for the employer as well.

One of the main concerns of the ET regarding the study process concerns the currently very low number of students enrolled in the programme. Even considering that it is a new, revised programme, it needs to attract a sufficient number of students short- to mid-term in order for it to be justified to run two separate MA programmes at the institute. This means the programme has to further work on and stress its attractiveness to prospective students and find its niche on the market of higher education programmes in the field of Journalism.

Talking to alumni it became apparent that most BA graduates preferred to either start working right away (mostly at one of the companies they did one of their internships at) or, if they considered enrolling for a MA programme, preferred a topical specialization and enrolled, for example, in political science or business and economy related study programmes. This view was confirmed by the social partners the ET talked to who explicitly stated, with only one exception, that they would prefer hiring someone with a MA degree in a relevant topical specialization, such as political science or economy, rather than someone with a Journalism MA degree. The ET acknowledges that the current MA programme in Journalism particularly focuses on students who are already employed and seek some more analytical and theoretical knowledge of journalism.

However, the ET, at this point, is not convinced that it is clear enough for prospective students what this programme aims to accomplish and can or cannot provide students with. If student enrollment numbers do not increase it casts serious doubts if the current focus of the programme is sustainable and if two separate MA programmes at the same institute are in fact justified. There also seems to be a potential mismatch as students indicated to the ET they especially value the practical elements whereas the focus of the programme seems to be on an analytical and more theoretical deepening of journalistic knowledge of students. This, however, is not necessarily what the social partners stressed to be relevant for their employees, as they would prefer more specialized topical knowledge and more up-to-date technical skills. Thus, it remains unclear to the ET which demand – on the student and on the employer side – the current focus of the programme is exactly catering to.

Given that there are no graduates of the new, revised study programme no statements can be made, at this point, regarding if, how and to what extent the programme succeeds in improving career prospects of students and how satisfied students and employers are with the skills graduates of the programme obtained. From the information provided, the ET concludes that there is an adequate level of academic and social support for students in the programme and that the assessment system of students' performance is adequate as well.

6. Programme management

It can be claimed that the main weakness of the programme in the past, as far as students were concerned, was the ill-timed schedule and the inability to balance work and studies. In 2012 the Committee discussed these issues and it was decided to re-organize the study programme so that the number of consultation hours was increased while a large portion of the studies was left to independent work. The ET thinks it is laudable that the study committee has shown to be responsive to this issue and previous evaluations.

However, as outlined above the ET sees several challenges that come about with the large increase in independent studies and decrease of contact hours – especially while not providing an up-to-date digital distance e-learning environment to students and/or making sure lecturers are using it. In the other MA programme at the institute, Analytical Journalism, a slightly different approach was taken to address the same issue by moving most of the class work after 3 p.m. in the afternoon. The ET believes, in line with what has been stated earlier and above, in a first step, there needs to be a formal evaluation if, how and to what extent the intended learning outcomes are in fact accomplished with the revised programme structure. Such evaluation should involve not only teachers and student representatives but also other stakeholders such as social partners and employers. In a second step, if it would turn out that there are deficits, the study committee should consider shifting and finding the right balance between independent work and actual contact hours, e.g. following the example implemented in the other MA programme of offering more afternoon or evening courses or block seminars or finding arrangements with employers to allow students to participate in such courses or combining research and course projects with topics relevant for the employer as well.

Behind these suggestions to consider increasing the amount of contact hours and reducing the amount of independent work is a concern on the side of the ET that the new, revised and condensed study programme provides graduates with a university-level MA degree and it needs to be made sure that students have actually received sufficient training, tutoring, guidance and supervision to acquire skills which justify awarding such a degree to them. This can and should not rely on independent work only or to such a large extent. This concern could be partly – still, not fully – alleviated if other measures would be taken which currently do not seem to be in place, such as the aforementioned implementation and active use of a dynamic digital distant e-learning environment.

The IoJ has good relationships with social partners and their pool of social partners is really impressive. However the social partners could be even more involved in the suggested regular programme evaluation and assess how it responds to market demands as well as by setting up and implementing a “mentor system” for current students, i.e. teaming up with one or a group of students and meeting them on a regular basis and share experiences. Furthermore, more efforts could be put to make use of alumni experience and contacts. The ET is aware of past initiatives to form an alumni club but from talking to alumni during the site visit the ET got the clear signal that they are 1) currently not very much involved and/or have not heard much about existing possibilities, while 2) they are willing and interested in staying in touch with and being involved in the programme if they are asked. Thus, currently there is a mismatch between the rather non-active status quo and the potential benefits of a more active alumni network for the programme and the IoJ could make use of this potential.

In general, the ET is positive about the general practice of conducting formal course evaluations. However, the currently available student evaluation results are based on such small samples (i.e., low student numbers) that one needs to be cautious in interpreting over-time trends based on these results and at the current stage of the revised programme. Given the currently low student numbers the ET further recommends to consider conducting more in-depth overall programme evaluations with students using more qualitative approaches, such as more in-depth focus group interviews with groups of students, in order to identify challenges and opportunities and to further improve the programme.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The ET recommends that *not only individual courses but also the programme as such is evaluated systematically and on a continuous basis*, involving relevant stakeholder groups such as students, course lecturers and thesis supervisors and social partners. The ET also recommends the results of both of these kinds of evaluations to be documented and transparently accessible, at least for those who participated in them and in such a way that it can be seen which changes and adjustments have been implemented as a result of these evaluations. The ET thus suggests to revise and expand the current evaluation procedure, together with students, teachers and social partners, and – importantly – reflecting the intended learning outcomes that are particular to the respective course and programme as a whole, and implement this revised evaluation procedure in such a way that it is applied by all lecturers without exception and centrally coordinated by the department. The ET also suggests to consider establishing initiatives which reward good teaching, e.g. with an annual “Best Teaching” award or extra research time or conference, course or research budget, which would be motivating for lecturers, and poor results should be approached with a plan together with the teacher concerned how to improve the situation, e.g. by taking additional training courses in the Professional skills improvement centre. Currently, *course evaluations* are handled differently by different lecturers and there is also different importance attached to course evaluation results among lecturers and some pay little to no attention to them or use their own forms, making current quality assurance measures less effective. Also the exact consequences and implications of course evaluation results are not fully clear at the moment. Furthermore, given the fact that the study programme has only recently been revised the ET recommends to also conduct more general *study programme evaluations* on a continuous basis and in a systematic way in order to monitor if the desired impact of the recent programme revision has been accomplished, to what extent, and what else could be done to further improve the programme. The ET would recommend to conduct

qualitative focus groups for this kind of study programme evaluation, either once a year or once a semester.

2. The ET believes it is important to assess if some of the assumptions the recent changes in the programme structure have been based upon are (still) accurate and match with students experiences and expectations and the changing demands in the media industry. This concerns, for example, *the role of practical elements and experiences in the programme* which students seem to want more of, also because not all students currently enrolled in the programme work in journalism. Furthermore, the decision to place more emphasis on *independent work* and reduce the number of contact hours and how this works in practice needs to be assessed. Not only in terms of student satisfaction with the programme but, importantly, also to make sure that the obtained qualifications are indeed sufficient and comparable to other MA programs and can indeed be – largely – obtained via independent work modules. While the independent work modules are ideally suited for the application of existing knowledge, the ET noted that the entry requirements are such that a significant number of students enrolled in the programme come from other disciplines and thus have very different knowledge levels and/or do not work in journalism and in light of the reduced number of contact hours (seminars and lectures) and shortened programme length it needs to be documented that students indeed obtain qualifications which are up to what can be expected from a MA-level study programme and which are largely comparable among graduates of the programme so that employers know and can count on a common stock of knowledge and skills graduates of the programme can be expected to possess. Finally, there also should be an indication of how the change towards more independent work by students and more consultation hours influence the workload of lecturers. Regarding the students, the ET assumes the need for help and personal tutoring during the periods of independent work to rather grow than be reduced. Thus, the ET suggests to *evaluate and re-consider the current emphasis on independent work* in the course programme in an effort to find the most appropriate balance between work inside and outside of the classroom in light of the considerations outlined above. The ET also recommends to consider offering more afternoon or evening courses or block seminars or finding bilateral arrangements with employers to allow students to participate in such courses or combining research and course projects with topics relevant for the employer as well.
3. During the site visit it became obvious that the *cooperation with the Professional skills improvement centre* is under-utilized currently. The ET recommends to actively encourage lecturers and possibly even reward them (non-paid) to pick up offers of the centre. Currently, there are practical obstacles which hold lecturers back to make use of the centre, such as conflicting time schedules. By closer cooperation with the centre and those involved in the programme administration this could be avoided or reduced, making it possible to make more efficient use of the courses provided at the centre. From talking with lecturers and students it became clear that there is a significant demand in *improving didactic skills* among the group of lecturers, i.e. currently the didactic skills and approaches, of teachers vary greatly, and also to make them more familiar and comfortable with the *use of digital online learning tools* which can help to create a more dynamic online learning environment. Thus, the ET suggests to invest *more active coordination* here and to make better use of the training opportunities for lecturers and to proactively pick up this point, *define quality criteria for good teaching, train teachers accordingly* and up to a joint level (e.g., documented by a basic teaching certificate required for all lecturers in the programme), *install a reward system for good teaching* (e.g., department-wide annual Best Teaching award) and *develop evaluation tools to document the success of these measures*. The ET believes that this would not only directly respond to the perceived disparity in didactic skills among lecturers but also can

become a quality sign and competitive advantage for the programme over competing programmes and towards prospective students and other interested stakeholders.

4. The ET recommends a *more pronounced international focus* of the study programme, by more explicitly focusing on global international trends in the field of journalism and media and communication, e.g. in the form of discussing relevant international case studies but also reflected in more international scientific literature as part of the course readings. Aside from a more international focus in course contents, as part of existing courses, new courses or a *new seminar or lecture series focusing on the latest trends in global journalism* (with rotating lecturers from the department and external lecturers and rotating content each year focusing on the most recent trends, changes and/or international case studies), the ET also suggests to look into the possibilities to *motivate more students enrolled in the programme to participate in the mobility programmes* and spend some time abroad. Currently, only very few students make use of such opportunities also because of the current structure of the programme and because many of them are already employed. However, the ET noted that the social partners also stressed the need for graduates to have international experiences and a more international outlook and based on this the ET recommends to 1) assess if and to what extent there is a demand among students to spend some time abroad as part of their studies, 2) find out about the reasons why more students abstain from pursuing participating in existing initiatives, and 3) how this could be facilitated, e.g. by *allowing for shorter exchanges or working together with employers to allow for students to combine their thesis work with a stay abroad on a topic relevant, and of use, for the employer as well*. The ET believes some more flexibility and willingness to explore new options and possibilities in this regard would be very welcome by students and further contribute to the overall quality and attractiveness of the programme which could then also be used in the communication with interested prospective students.
5. The ET recommends the more consistent *implementation and more active use of a dynamic digital distant e-learning environment* (i.e., moodle), especially given the strong emphasis on independent work in light of the fact that many students are already employed. Teachers in the programme with little or no experience in using such tools should be provided with the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge by participating in extra courses and apply it so that students can make full use of the benefits of a digital distant e-learning environment.
6. The ET suggests to *establish a more active alumni network*. Of course the programme has only been revised recently and there are not many graduates of the new programme but the ET does not believe that this is a necessary condition to invest in an alumni programme more generally. With the exception of a few individual and selective approaches to specific alumni in the past, on an individual teacher-to-student basis, there is no visible current systematic effort to make use of alumni and their experiences and contacts. The ET believes such a network could be very valuable and contribute to the study experience of current students on many levels. The ET suggests to come up with a plan and then implement it in order to create a *more dynamic network* which puts current and past (and even prospective) students in touch and provide a platform, online and offline, for them to meet and interact and stay in touch. To facilitate this the ET suggests to include current students and alumni in coming up with such an initiative, together with the programme administration, and to define the best ways, activities and possible channels to establish such network.
7. The ET suggests to review the current situation regarding lecturers from practice as they are very important for the programme but currently have only little incentive to become involved. Students value the practical elements of the programme and want even more of it and this can be a strength of the programme, at the same time teachers from practice

- feel there is little reward to become involved as the salaries are low and not market-oriented and there is little other formal recognition or reward which would justify investing a lot of time in the programme. The ET suggests looking into further possibilities to *attract professionals from practice* to teach in the programme and *make this a priority* (e.g., award a more prestigious formal status and look into possibilities to offer higher salaries).
8. The ET recommends *installing a reward system for scientific accomplishments for (a) junior staff members and/or (b)*, e.g. an internal young scholar award for the best paper presented by a junior faculty member at a conference or published in a journal or other publication and/or an internal award for the best academic article published in an *international* peer-reviewed journal by a staff member of the institute, could be motivating for the staff to engage in academic publishing even more actively and *move towards a more international orientation and focus in research and publication activities*.
 9. The ET recommends to *explore opportunities to get the social partners even more involved into the programme*. While there are good contacts already there also still is potential to make even better use of the existing co-operations. For example, several social partners expressed willingness in getting involved in a ‘*mentor system*’. Undoubtedly students could profit from such a system and the ET recommends exploring more concrete options together with the group of social partners and current students to see how such a mentor system could look like in concrete terms and who would be willing to participate in it.
 10. Regarding *the role of social media in the curriculum*, the ET stresses the importance to review the context of social changes and media system dynamics regularly and to integrate the latest theoretical, empirical, and practical knowledge on this subject more formally into the study programme, i.e. as integral part and perspective in all courses but also, possibly, as central theme of a new course on its own. The ET believes such efforts are important and necessary when taking into account the ongoing rapid changes in the relations between traditional news media and social media as it influences the journalistic profession and what it means to be and work as a journalist today and in the future. The ET believes that this area of journalism research and practice - in particular - would benefit from inviting professional and scientific external guest lecturers in order to keep up with the most recent trends in this rapidly changing new media environment.
 11. The ET stresses the need to *give more priority to social scientific quantitative and qualitative research methods in the curriculum*, e.g. in the form of a *specific method course*, and to pay attention to how such a course is designed and taught to students. The programme needs to provide students with knowledge and training of a variety of different research methods relevant to the preparation of the Master thesis rather than discussing research methods only as part of other courses or leaving it up to the thesis supervisor to provide specific method knowledge to each student on an individual basis. From talking to students and alumni the ET noted that there was a common perception that it very much depended on the assigned supervisor and his or her own method expertise how much help they got with regard to research methods and how useful it was and even which method they eventually applied for their thesis. However, it should not be that students are either “lucky - or not” depending on their assigned supervisor or previous methods knowledge when they entered the programme. The ET suggests to *design and implement one specific course on research methods (covering qualitative and quantitative methods) into the curriculum*.
 12. Due to the currently very low number of students enrolled in the programme, the selection of optional courses is very limited at the moment. The ET suggests to *offer*

alternative optional courses that meet interests and/or professional preferences of students in the future.

13. The ET noted that from 2008 to 2012 only four master students published articles in the Faculty's journal "Žurnalistikos tyrimai" (Journalism Research). The ET suggests to monitor the current situation and *provide an incentive system for students to ensure more student involvement in research activities.*
14. Students in the programme currently seem to have quite different study backgrounds and practical or professional experiences. The ET suggests that if students are accepted into the programme who lack in practical journalistic skills or whose study background is more or less unrelated to journalism, there need to be *additional supplementary or preparatory courses* provided for these students in addition to and despite the entry exam. The reason for this is that the ET considers it to be important that future employers know what a graduate of this programme can or cannot do and there *needs to be a basic, common stock of knowledge and skills.* Thus, to accomplish this the programme needs to make sure that *students are not too different in the programme-relevant qualifications they possess once they graduate* and this consideration should already play a role in the admissions phase and how to deal with initial differences in skills and backgrounds of applicants to the programme.
15. The ET recommends that the necessary and planned *investments in the technical equipment and infrastructure* (such as concerning the radio studio but also TV), after several delays, are now taking place in due course and despite financial constraints. It is imperative that journalism students train their practical skills with equipment they are also later expected to be able to handle in practice.
16. Finally, given the currently very low number of students enrolled in the programme, the ET suggests to *invest more efforts into advertising the programme*, for example by 1) investigating the reasons current students were interested in and enrolled in the programme (this and also the next points below could be subject to the suggested study programme evaluation, see point 1 above), 2) assessing what current students see as the strength of the programme and also what their expectations are, 3) assessing market demands and expectations together with the social partners, 4) intensifying contact with alumni as 'ambassadors of the programme', and 5) investing in marketing the programme financially and also strategically with material which stresses the strengths and unique features of the programme to potentially interested prospective students.

IV. SUMMARY

The MA study programme in Journalism provided by the Institute of Journalism at Vilnius University has recently been undergoing significant changes in terms of structure and target focus. The programme has not yet produced its first graduates and reviewing the impact and consequences of the recent changes in the programme will demand further attention in the upcoming time period. The current programme, implemented in autumn 2013, is especially designed for students who already work in the media sector, as a result of this orientation the number of hours devoted to independent work and consultations was significantly increased, the number of contact hours was reduced, and the overall length of the programme was decreased (from 2 years to 1.5 years). The ET stresses the specific need, in a situation like this in which a study programme has gone through significant changes, to formally evaluate the new (merged, updated or divided) course modules – but also the study programme as such – in order to see if

the intended consequences behind these changes have been accomplished and if there are no unanticipated negative side effects (e.g., concerning workload, knowledge transfer, reaching intended learning outcomes, meeting student expectations etc.). This should include all relevant stakeholder groups, such as lecturers, students and social partners. Currently, within the department there are diverging views on the quality of the course evaluation instruments, some teachers use it while others explicitly say they disregard it or are using their own ones. Also the way feedback is dealt with varies, i.e. staff states to pay different amounts of attention to the evaluation results. In terms of quality assurance there should be one consistent way of how evaluation procedures are handled.

Given that students are awarded with a university MA level degree upon successful completion of the programme, it needs to be reviewed on a continuous basis if the obtained qualifications are indeed sufficient and comparable to other MA programmes, especially due to the reduced amount of contact hours (lectures and seminars). While there are good reasons to expand the amount of independent work of students it also means it needs to be monitored that this time is used efficiently by students and there is traceable study success as a result of these parts of the program which later justify awarding a university MA degree. The ET recommends revising and increasing the proportion of contact and consultation hours to provide adequate help, supervision and personal tutoring for students, which is necessary to assure that the independent work of students really is successful and that the intended learning outcomes and programme aims are achieved. In general, it should be reviewed if the amount of independent work is not too large at the moment to assure adequate knowledge provision and stimulating scientific discussion among students and with qualified lecturers as should be expected when awarding a MA degree. While the ET does believe that the balance between independent work and contact hours should be shifted towards the latter at least to some extent it still means that distance e-learning tools should be implemented and utilized more (across course modules and lecturers) to create and make full use of an online distance learning environment, connecting students with each other and students with lecturers, in order to maintain and support the revised programme structure.

The main aim of the study programme is to educate experts for wider tasks related to mass communication and the media sector as a whole rather than for professional journalism alone. There is more of an analytical focus, i.e. on theoretical reflection rather than on the training of practical journalistic skills and deeper knowledge and qualification of core journalistic skills are not mentioned explicitly in the programme aims. This re-orientation is in line with the target focus on students who already work in the media sector and thus have some professional experience already and more of an interest in analytical reflection. On the one hand, the programme thus has the potential to claim a unique position among competing programmes and be distinctive in its orientation, structure and content focus. On the other hand, it needs to be communicated more clearly to prospective students what they exactly can expect from the programme and what not. While there have been good reasons to revise the programme in the past, it needs to still show, in reality, if there is in fact sufficient demand for such a programme and for such "analysts of journalism" in terms of later job prospects. Current enrollment numbers are very low and students expressed to expect more practical elements in the programme as not all of them in fact have journalistic experience or work in journalistic professions. Given that the focus of the programme is rather on theoretical and analytical reflection and not on deepening core journalistic skills, while the programme title is MA in "Journalism", there is potential for confusion and it needs to be reviewed if the assumptions the revised programme structure is based upon are in fact valid in practice. This can only reliably be judged once the programme has produced its first graduates and student enrollment numbers can be tracked over a longer period

of time. The ET recommends to further improve the overall balance of the programme regarding the role and integration of practical elements vis-a-vis theoretical and analytical modules in light of diverse student backgrounds and changing market demands. Currently, the programme is designed in a way that it runs the risk that it does not necessarily attract the type of students it is ideally suited for and it needs to develop a clearer vision what set of relevant skills it provides, how these are relevant in the market, and what graduates of this programme typically and distinctively stand for.

More specifically about the curriculum, the ET thinks it is important that students learn about processes of digitisation, convergence, and globalization. Furthermore, the ET recommends implementing specific courses on research methodology and social media into the programme. Journalism is a rapidly changing profession, with the use of social media now being standard, and this should also be reflected in the curriculum. Regarding research methodology and in terms of quality assurance the evaluation team believes it is important to know for later employers what they can expect from a graduate of this particular program and thus there should be a comparable degree of research methods knowledge and skills across all students and this can be achieved the best by students following the same research methods course. Such a course would not only be important in light of different student background and in preparation of the MA thesis but also for future analysts of journalism, who will need to be able to interpret formal and official reports containing statistical information and/or apply social scientific research methods themselves as part of their work. It is common practice in most journalism study programs on MA-level in many other countries that students follow at least one distinct course on research methodology in preparation of their final thesis. Finally, there should be a more pronounced international focus in the curriculum, for example by more explicitly focusing on global international trends in the field of journalism and media and communication.

One of the assets of the programme certainly is that the academic staff and teachers really care about the programme and the students and are clearly involved and motivated. The evaluation team got a sense of community by talking to the different stakeholder groups. There is a lot of commitment and good intentions on the side of the administration and also the students and social partners agree that the administration listens to their suggestions and wants to further improve the programme, e.g. they respond and react to suggestions and complaints and changes that have been promised have also been implemented. However, teachers and students also noted that there are large differences in didactic skills between lecturers and the ET recommends making more use of the Professional skills improvement centre and to encourage especially those lecturers with below-average evaluation results to participate in courses designed to improve their didactic skills. A main point of concern for the ET was the apparent perceived lack of recognition for professional external teachers from practice. The work done by these professional partners is extremely important for the success of the study programme as a whole. Yet, it is not very attractive currently for partners from practice to engage in the program as teacher, not in terms of salary and not in terms of formal recognition (i.e., titles). This situation needs to be changed and external teachers need to feel rewarded and actively appreciated, also in order for the programme to attract the best possible partners. The evaluation team understands there are obvious financial constraints but believes this is an issue that should have absolute priority.

At this point, the ET can only say little about the involvement of the student body in the programme. The revised programme only started in fall 2013 and student numbers are low and there are no graduates of the new programme. Talking to a few students currently enrolled in the programme it was striking, however, that they had very different study backgrounds and expressed that only about half the students in the programme would have practical journalistic

experience or would work in journalism. This situation needs to be monitored in the future to then review if the assumptions the revised programme structure and content is based upon is in fact accurate as it otherwise would affect how suitable the programme is for the kinds of students who actually enroll.

The programme has good relationships with social partners and the pool of social partners is impressive. The ET recommends to include the social partners even more both in the already suggested programme evaluation (see above) to further improve the programme and assess how it responds to market demands as well as by setting up and implementing a “mentor system” for current students who could be teamed up with specific partners from practice and meet with them on a regular basis, discuss their projects and apply their theoretical and analytical knowledge to real world scenarios.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Journalism* (state code – 621P50001) at Vilnius 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	2
2.	Curriculum design	2
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	2
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	2
	Total:	14

*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.

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader:

Dr. Andreas Schuck

Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Prof.dr. Jyrki Jyrkiäinen

Prof. dr. Richard Haynes

Mr. Andrius Tapinas

Ms. Jolita Čeičytė

**VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO ANTROSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
ŽURNALISTIKA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 621P50001) 2014-07-18 EKSPERTINIO
VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-408 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Vilniaus universiteto studijų programa *Žurnalistika* (valstybinis kodas – 621P50001) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	2
2.	Programos sandara	2
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	2
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	2
	Iš viso:	14

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

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

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

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

<...>

IV. SANTRAUKA

Vilniaus universiteto Žurnalistikos instituto vykdomoje magistro studijų programoje *Žurnalistika* neseniai buvo atlikta nemažų pakeitimų, susijusių su struktūra ir programos akcentais. Šios programos dar nebaigė nė viena laida, todėl, norint įvertinti programos pastarųjų pokyčių poveikį ir pasekmes, šį darbą reikės atlikti ateityje. Dabartinė programa, kuri pradėta vykdyti 2013 m. rudenį, yra skirta tiems studentams, kurie jau dirba žiniasklaidos sektoriuje, todėl skiriamų valandų savarankiškam darbui ir konsultacijoms skaičius buvo gerokai padidintas, o kontaktinių valandų skaičius – sumažintas, taigi bendra programos trukmė sumažėjo nuo 2 iki 1,5 metų. Ekspertai pabrėžė, kad atsižvelgiant į tai, jog programa buvo gerokai pakeista, dabar ypač reikia formaliai įvertinti naujų (sujungtų, atnaujintų arba padalytų) kursų modulius, taip pat ir pačią studijų programą, siekiant nustatyti, ar atlikus pokyčius išliko numatomi studijų rezultatai, taip pat ar nėra nenumatyto neigiamo šalutinio poveikio (pavyzdžiui, darbo krūvis, žinių perdavimas, numatomų studijų rezultatų pasiekimas, studentų lūkesčių atitikimas ir pan.) Tai turėtų apimti visas suinteresuotų socialinių dalininkų grupes, pavyzdžiui, dėstytojus, studentus ir socialinius partnerius. Šiuo metu katedroje yra nesutarimų dėl kursų vertinimo priemonių kokybės, nes kai kurie dėstytojai jas naudoja, kiti atsisako naudoti arba naudoja savo. Taip pat skiriasi grįžtamojo

ryšio vertinimas, t. y., dėstytojais skirtingai atsižvelgia į vertinimo rezultatus. Taip pat turėtų būti vienas nuoseklus kokybės užtikrinimo vertinimo būdas.

Sėkmingai studijų programą baigę studentai įgyja universitetinį magistro kvalifikacinį laipsnį, tačiau būtina nuolat persvarstyti ir įvertinti, ar įgytos kompetencijos iš tiesų yra pakankamos ir panašios į įgytas baigus kitas magistrantūros programas, ypač atsižvelgiant į sumažintą kontaktinių valandų (paskaitų ir seminarų) skaičių. Nors yra pakankamai priežasčių padidinti savarankiškam studentų darbui skirtų valandų skaičių, tačiau reikia stebėti, ar studentai šį laiką veiksmingai išnaudoja, ar galima nustatyti pasiektą studijų pažangą, kuri atitinka suteiktą universitetinį magistro laipsnį. Ekspertai rekomenduoja apsvarstyti ir padidinti kontaktinių ir konsultacijoms skirtų valandų skaičių, siekiant užtikrinti, kad studentams bus suteikta tinkama pagalba, priežiūra ir asmeninis kuravimas, kuris yra būtinas norint užtikrinti studentų savarankiško darbo sėkmę, ir kad numatomi studijų rezultatai ir programos tikslai bus pasiekti. Apskritai reikėtų įvertinti, ar šiuo metu savarankiškam darbui skirtų valandų skaičius nėra per didelis, siekiant užtikrinti, kad studentams būtų suteiktas tinkamas žinių kiekis ir studentai būtų skatinami diskutuoti mokslinė tema su kvalifikuotais dėstytojais, kaip turėtų būti studijuojant magistrantūrą. Nors ekspertai mano, kad daugiau valandų turėtų būti skirta kontaktinėms valandoms, o ne savarankiškam darbui, bent jau kažkiek, vis tiek reikia diegti nuotolinio e. mokymo priemones ir jas daugiau naudoti (moduliuose ir taip pat dėstytojams), taip pat sukurti ir visapusiškai išnaudoti interneto nuotolinio mokymo aplinką, kur gali studentai bendrauti tarpusavyje ir studentai – su dėstytojais, siekiant išlaikyti ir pateisinti atnaujintą programos struktūrą.

Pagrindinis studijų programos tikslas – ugdyti masinės komunikacijos ir žiniasklaidos sektoriaus, kaip visumos, plačios erudicijos ekspertus, o ne vien profesionalius žurnalistus. Daugiau dėmesio skiriama analizei, t. y. teoriniams svarstymams, o ne praktiniams žurnalistikos įgūdžiams ugdyti, gilesnėms žinioms ir pagrindinėms žurnalistikos kompetencijoms tobulinti – visa tai nėra aiškiai nurodyta programos tiksluose. Nauja orientacija atitinka orientavimąsi į studentus, kurie jau dirba žiniasklaidos sektoriuje, todėl turi šiek tiek profesinės patirties ir juos labiau domina analitinis mąstymas. Viena vertus, tokia programa turi potencialą pretenduoti į išskirtinę vietą tarp konkuruojančių programų ir išsiskiria savo orientacija, struktūra ir turinio kryptimi. Kita vertus, būsimiems studentams būtina aiškiai pasakyti, ko tiksliai jie gali tikėtis iš šios programos ir ko ne. Nors būta pakankamai priežasčių, kodėl reikėjo persvarstyti ir atnaujinti programą, tačiau iš tikrųjų dar reikia įrodyti, ar yra pakankamai paklausī tokia programa ir tokie analitikai žurnalistai, kalbant apie vėlesnes darbo perspektyvas. Programą pasirinkusiųjų skaičius yra labai mažas. Studentai sakė, kad tikėjosi, kad programoje bus daugiau praktinių elementų, nes ne visi jų iš tikrųjų turi žurnalistinės patirties ar dirba žurnalistikoje. Atsižvelgiant į tai, kad programos tikslas yra veikiau teorinis ir analitinis svarstymas, o ne pagrindinių žurnalistikos įgūdžių gilinimas (nors programos pavadinimas yra magistrantūros programa „Žurnalistika“), toks pavadinimas gali suklaidinti, todėl turi būti apsvarstyta, ar prielaidos, kuriomis grindžiamas atnaujintas studijų planas, iš tiesų galioja praktikoje. Tai bus galima patikimai įvertinti tik tuomet, kai programą baigs pirmieji absolventai ir per ilgesnį laikotarpį bus galima stebėti stojančiųjų skaičių. Ekspertai rekomenduoja toliau tobulinti bendrą programos praktinių elementų vaidmenį ir teorinių bei analitinių modulių integracijos pusiausvyrą, atsižvelgiant į studentų skirtingą išsilavinimą ir besikeičiančius rinkos poreikius. Šiuo metu programa yra sudaryta taip, kad kyla rizika, kad gali būti sunku pritraukti tuos studentus, kuriems idealiai tiktų tokia programa, todėl reikia parengti aiškesnę viziją, kokiems įgūdžiams ugdyti ji skirta, koks yra tokių įgūdžių poreikis rinkoje ir kokiam darbui paprastai tinka baigusieji šią programą.

Kalbant konkrečiai apie programos sandarą, ekspertai mano, kad svarbu, jog studentai susipažintų su skaitmeninio, konvergencijos ir globalizacijos procesais. Be to, ekspertai rekomenduoja į programą įtraukti specialius mokslinių tyrimų metodologijos ir socialinių medijų kursus. Žurnalistika – sparčiai kintanti profesija, kuri kaip standartą dabar taiko socialines medijas, o tai ir turėtų atsispindėti programos turinyje. Dėl mokslinių tyrimų metodologijos ir vertinimo kokybės užtikrinimo ekspertai mano, kad svarbu, jog būsimieji darbdaviai žinotų, ko jie gali tikėtis iš šios programos absolventų, todėl visi studentai turėtų įgyti panašaus lygio žinių apie mokslinių tyrimų metodus ir įgūdžius. Tai pasiekti būtų paprasčiausia, jei studentai išklaustytų tokį patį mokslinių tyrimų metodų kursą. Toks dalyko kursas būtų ne tik svarbus, atsižvelgiant į skirtingą studentų išsilavinimą ir rengiant magistro baigiamąjį darbą, bet ir ateityje dirbant žurnalistikos analitikais, turėsiančiais gebėti interpretuoti formalius ir oficialius pranešimus, kuriuose pateikiama statistinė informacija, ir / arba patys turės mokėti taikyti socialinius mokslinius tyrimo metodus savo darbe. Tai įprasta žurnalistikos magistrantūros studijų programų praktika daugelyje kitų šalių, kur studentai išklauso bent vieną atskirą kursą apie mokslinių tyrimų metodologiją rengdamiesi baigiamajam darbui. Programos turinyje turėtų ryškiau atsispindėti tarptautinė perspektyva, pavyzdžiui, daugiau dėmesio skiriama pasaulinėms tarptautinėms tendencijoms žurnalistikos, žiniasklaidos ir komunikacijos srityse.

Vienas iš programos vertingų dalykų yra tas, kad akademinis personalas ir dėstytojai tikrai rūpinasi programa, o studentai aiškiai dalyvauja šiame procese ir yra motyvuoti. Bendraujant su įvairiomis socialinių dalininkų grupėmis, ekspertams susidarė bendruomeniškumo išpūdis. Vadovybė jaučiasi įsipareigojusi ir turi gerų ketinimų. Studentai ir socialiniai partneriai gerai vertina, kad vadovybė įsiklauso į jų pasiūlymus, ir nori toliau tobulinti programą, pvz., reaguoja į pasiūlymus ir skundus, o pokyčiai, kurie buvo žadėti, taip pat buvo įgyvendinti. Tačiau dėstytojai ir studentai pažymėjo, kad labai skiriasi dėstytojų didaktiniai gebėjimai, todėl ekspertai rekomenduoja aktyviau naudotis Profesinio tobulinimo centro paslaugomis ir skatinti dėstytojus, ypač tuos, kurių vertinimo rezultatai yra žemesni nei vidutiniai, lankyti kursus, skirtus jų didaktiniams gebėjimams gerinti. Pagrindinis ekspertams susirūpinimą keliantis klausimas – akivaizdi profesionalių kviestinių dėstytojų, užsiimančių praktine veikla, stoka. Šių profesionalų atliekamas darbas yra labai svarbus, siekiant garantuoti studijų programos, kaip visumos, sėkmę. Tačiau šiuo metu nėra labai patrauklu partneriams, užsiimantiems praktine veikla, dėstyti programos dalykus nei dėl darbo užmokesčio, nei formalaus pripažinimo (t. y. kvalifikacinio laipsnio). Norint į programą pritraukti geriausius galimus partnerius, šią situaciją reikia keisti – kviestiniai dėstytojai turi jaustis pripažinti ir vertinami. Ekspertai supranta, kad yra akivaizdžių finansinių suvaržymų, bet mano, kad šiam klausimui turi būti skiriamas absoliutus prioritetas.

Šiuo metu ekspertai negali daug ko pasakyti apie studentų dalyvavimą programoje. Atnaujinta programa pradėta vykdyti tik 2013 m. rudenį, o studentų skaičius yra nedidelis, taip pat nėra naująją programą baigusiu absolventų. Pokalbis su keliais studentais, kurie neseniai įstojo studijuoti, nustebino, kad jie yra baigę labai skirtingas studijas ir tik maždaug pusė programos studentų rinksis praktinį žurnalistikos darbą arba galėtų dirbti žurnalistikos srityje. Šią situaciją reikia stebėti ateityje ir paskui įvertinti, ar prielaidos, kuriomis yra grindžiama atnaujinta programos struktūra ir turinys, iš tiesų yra tikslios, nes tai gali būti atsakymas į klausimą, ar studentams tinka jų pasirinktoji programa.

Programa turi gerus ryšius su socialiniais partneriais, kurių spektras yra labai platus. Ekspertai rekomenduoja įtraukti socialinius partnerius tiek į jau siūlytą programų vertinimą (žr. aukščiau) ir toliau tobulinti ir įvertinti programą, kaip ji reaguoja į rinkos poreikius, tiek kuriant ir įgyvendinant mentoriaus sistemą dabartiniams studentams, kurie galėtų drauge su konkrečiais

partneriais praktikais dirbti, nuolat su jais susitikti, aptarti projektus bei taikyti teorines ir analitines žinias realiose situacijose.

<...>

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Ekspertai rekomenduoja *sistemiškai vertinti ne tik atskirus kursus / dalykus, bet taip pat ir pačią programą*, įtraukiant atitinkamas socialinių dalininkų grupes, kaip antai: studentus, dalykų dėstytojus, baigiamųjų darbų vadovus ir socialinius partnerius. Ekspertai taip pat rekomenduoja abiejų šių vertinimo rūšių rezultatus informinti dokumentuose, kurie būtų skaidriai prieinami, bent jau tiems, kurie juose dalyvavo. Tokiu būdu būtų galima matyti, kurie pagal vertinimus pateikti pakeitimai ir patikslinimai buvo įgyvendinti. Todėl ekspertai siūlo persvarstyti ir išplėsti dabartinę vertinimo tvarką kartu su studentais, dėstytojais ir socialiniais partneriais ir, svarbiausia, atspindėti numatomus studijų rezultatus, kurie yra konkrečiai nustatyti atitinkamam kursui / dalykui ir visai programai, ir įgyvendinti šią patikslintą vertinimo tvarką taip, kad ją taikytų visi dėstytojai be išimties ir centralizuotai koordinuotą katedra. Ekspertai taip pat siūlo apsvarstyti galimybę įsteigti apdovanojimą už gerą dėstymą, pvz., kasmetinį apdovanojimą „Geriausias dėstymas / dėstytojas“ ar skirti papildomo laiko moksliniam tyrimui arba dalyvauti konferencijoje, taip pat skirti lėšų kursui ar moksliniam tyrimui – tai motyvuotų dėstytojus. Esant prastiems rezultatams kartu su šiuo dėstytoju reikėtų parengti planą, kaip pagerinti padėtį, pvz., lankyti papildomus mokymo kursus Profesinių įgūdžių tobulinimo centre. Šiuo metu *kursų / dalykų vertinimą* skirtingi dėstytojai atlieka nevienodai, taip pat dėstytojai skirtingai vertina dalyko / kurso vertinimo rezultatus, kai kurie mažai skiria dėmesio arba iš viso neskiria, arba taiko savo vertinimo formas, todėl dabartinės kokybės užtikrinimo priemonės nėra tokios veiksmingos. Šiuo metu nėra visiškai aiškios kurso vertinimo rezultatų tikslios pasekmės ir jų svarba. Atsižvelgiant į tai, kad studijų programa neseniai buvo atnaujinta, ekspertai rekomenduoja nuolat ir sistemingai atlikti bendresnius *studijų programos vertinimus* – tai leistų stebėti, ar neseniai atlikti programos pakeitimai davė laukiamą rezultatą, koku mastu ir ką dar galima padaryti toliau patobulinant programą. Ekspertai rekomenduoja sudaryti tokio studijų programos vertinimo būdo kokybines tikslines grupes arba kartą per metus, arba kartą per semestrą.
2. Ekspertų nuomone, svarbu įvertinti, ar prielaidos, kuriomis buvo pagrįsti naujausi studijų plano pokyčiai, yra (vis dar) aktualios ir atitinka studentų patirtį ir lūkesčius bei kintančius žiniasklaidos pramonės poreikius. Tai susiję, pavyzdžiui, su *programos praktinio darbo dalimi ir patirtimi*, atsižvelgiant į tai, ko studentai norėjo, kad būtų įtraukta daugiau, nes šiuo metu ne visi pagal programą studijavę studentai dirba žurnalistikos srityje. Be to, buvo priimtas sprendimas skirti daugiau dėmesio *savarankiškam darbui* ir sumažinti kontaktinių valandų skaičių, todėl reikia įvertinti, kaip tai atsiliepė praktikoje. Reikia ne tik įvertinti, ar studentai patenkinti programa, bet, svarbiausia, įsitikinti, ar įgytos kvalifikacijos iš tiesų yra pakankamos ir suderinamos su kitomis magistrantūros studijų programomis ir ar išties jas galima įgyti taikant savarankiško darbo modulius. Nors savarankiško darbo moduliai idealiai tinka turimoms žinioms taikyti, ekspertai pažymėjo, kad stojimo reikalavimai yra tokie, kad didelis skaičius į programą priimtų studentų yra iš kitų disciplinų, todėl jų žinių lygis labai skiriasi ir (arba) jie nedirba žurnalistikoje. Atsižvelgiant į sumažintą kontaktinių valandų skaičių (seminarai ir paskaitos) ir sutrumpintą programos trukmę, dokumentuose reikia

fiksuoti, ar studentai iš tiesų įgyja kvalifikacijas, kurių galima tikėtis iš magistrantūros studijų programos, ir ar visi programos absolventai įgyja panašias kvalifikacijas. Tai svarbu, nes darbdaviai turi žinoti, kokias bendrąsias žinias ir įgūdžius programos absolventai bus įgiję. Be to, reikėtų įvertinti, kokią įtaką turės numatyta didesnė savarankiško darbo apimtis studentams ir kaip daugiau konsultacinių valandų paveiks dėstytojų darbo krūvį. Dėl studentų ekspertai mano, kad pagalbos ir asmeninių konsultacijų apimtį savarankiško darbo metu greičiau reikia padidinti, o ne sumažinti. Todėl ekspertai siūlo *įvertinti ir iš naujo apsvarstyti šiuo metu padidintą savarankiškam darbui skirtą apimtį* kursų programoje ir stengtis rasti tinkamiausią darbo auditorijoje ir už jos ribų pusiausvyrą, atsižvelgiant į pirmiau išdėstytas aplinkybes. Ekspertai taip pat rekomenduoja apsvarstyti galimybę siūlyti daugiau kursų arba seminarų po pietų arba vakare, arba rasti abipusius susitarimus su darbdaviais, kad studentai galėtų dalyvauti tokiuose kursuose ar sujungti mokslinių tyrimų ir kursinių darbų projektus su darbdaviui aktualiomis temomis.

3. Vizito universitete metu tapo aišku, kad bendradarbiavimas su Profesinių įgūdžių tobulinimo centru šiuo metu yra menkas. Ekspertai rekomenduoja aktyviai skatinti dėstytojus ir galbūt net apdovanoti, suteikiant galimybę centre rinktis (nemokamai) siūlomas paslaugas. Šiuo metu yra praktinių kliūčių, trukdančių dėstytojams pasinaudoti centru, pavyzdžiui, besikertantys grafikai. Glaudesnis bendradarbiavimas su centru ir dalyvaujančiais administruojant programą leistų pašalinti arba sumažinti kliūtis, todėl būtų galima veiksmingiau pasinaudoti centre siūlomais kursais. Bendraujant su dėstytojais ir studentais tapo aišku, kad yra didelis poreikis *tobulinti* dėstytojų *didaktinius įgūdžius*, t. y. šiuo metu dėstytojų didaktiniai įgūdžiai ir metodai labai skiriasi. Taip pat juos reikėtų labiau supažindinti, skatinti ir padėti jiems *naudoti skaitmenines internetines mokymosi priemones*, kurios padėtų sukurti dinamiškesnę virtualią mokymosi aplinką. Ekspertai siūlo *aktyviau koordinuoti* ir spręsti šį klausimą ir dėstytojams geriau išnaudoti mokymo galimybes, taip pat reikia *apibrėžti gero dėstymo kokybės kriterijus ir atitinkamai mokyti dėstytojus*, kad jie pasiektų bendrą lygį (pavyzdžiui, numatyti, kad visiems programos dėstytojams reikia dėstymo pagrindų pažymėjimo), *įdiegti apdovanojimo sistemą už gerą dėstymą* (pavyzdžiui, katedros lygiu įsteigti metinį apdovanojimą „Geriausias dėstytojas“) ir *sukurti vertinimo įrankius, pagal kuriuos būtų galima įvertinti šių priemonių sėkmę, bei fiksuoti dokumentuose*. Ekspertai mano, kad tai ne tik tiesiogiai leistų atsižvelgti į pastebėtus dėstytojų didaktinių gebėjimų skirtumus, bet galėtų tapti ir kokybės ženklu bei konkurencingu programos pranašumu, lyginant su kitomis programomis, ir būtų naudinga būsimiems studentams ir kitiems suinteresuotiems socialiniams dalininkams.
4. Ekspertai rekomenduoja *stiprinti studijų programos tarptautiškumą*, daugiau ir aiškiau sutelkiant dėmesį į pasaulines tarptautines tendencijas žurnalistikos, žiniasklaidos ir komunikacijos srityse, pvz., aptariant atitinkamus tarptautinius atvejų tyrimus, skaitant daugiau tarptautinės mokslinės literatūros, kuri būtų kurso dalis. Reikia ne tik daugiau dėmesio skirti kurso turinio tarptautiškumui, kaip esamai kurso daliai, kurti *naujus kursus ar naujus seminarus ar paskaitų seriją, skirtus naujausioms pasaulinės žurnalistikos tendencijoms* (rotuojantys katedros dėstytojai ir kviestiniai lektoriai bei rotacinis turinys kiekvienais metais sutelkiant dėmesį į naujausias tendencijas, pokyčius ir (arba) tarptautinių atvejų studijas), bet, kaip siūlo ekspertai, ir ieškoti galimybių, kaip *motyvuoti, kad daugiau pagal šią programą studijuojančių studentų dalyvautų judumo programose* ir galėtų praleisti šiek tiek laiko užsienyje. Šiuo metu tik labai nedaug studentų pasinaudoja tokiomis galimybėmis, žinoma, dėl dabartinės programos struktūros ir todėl, kad daugelis iš jų jau dirba. Tačiau ekspertai pažymėjo, kad socialiniai partneriai taip pat pabrėžė poreikį, kad absolventai turėtų tarptautinės patirties ir daugiau tarptautinių galimybių. Remdamiesi tuo, ekspertai rekomenduoja: 1) įvertinti, ar esama ir koku

- mastu esama studentų poreikio praleisti dalį studijų laiko užsienyje; 2) išsiaiškinti priežastis, kodėl vis daugiau studentų atsisako dalyvauti esamose iniciatyvose; 3) kaip tai būtų galima išspręsti, pvz., *numatyti trumpesnius mainus arba kartu dirbti su darbdaviais, kad studentai galėtų susieti savo baigiamąjį darbą pagal temą su išvykimu į užsienį, kuo galėtų pasinaudoti ir darbdavys*. Ekspertai mano, kad studentai mielai pritartų, jei būtų šiek tiek daugiau lankstumo ir noro ieškoti naujų variantų ir galimybių šioje srityje ir visa tai prisidėtų prie bendro programos kokybės ir patrauklumo gerinimo bei tai būtų galima panaudoti bendraujant su suinteresuotais būsimaisiais studentais.
5. Ekspertai rekomenduoja nuosekliau *įgyvendinti ir aktyviau naudoti dinamišką skaitmeninę nuotolinio e. mokymosi aplinką* (t. y. Moodle), ypač atsižvelgiant į tai, kad daug dėmesio skiriama savarankiškam darbui, nes daugelis studentų jau dirba. Programos dėstytojams turintiems mažai arba visai neturintiems patirties, kaip naudoti tokias priemones, turėtų būti suteikta galimybė įgyti reikiamų įgūdžių ir žinių dalyvaujant papildomuose kursuose, ir mokėti naudoti priemones taip, kad studentai galėtų visapusiškai išnaudoti skaitmeninio nuotolinio e. mokymosi aplinkos naudą.
 6. Ekspertai siūlo sukurti *aktyvesnę Alumni tinklą*. Žinoma, programa buvo neseniai atnaujinta ir nėra naują programą baigusių absolventų, tačiau ekspertai nemano, kad tai yra būtina sąlyga norint inicijuoti Alumni programą. Išskyrus keletą individualių ir pasirinktų metodų bendraujant su konkrečiais absolventais praecityje, taip pat individualų dėstytojo ir studento bendravimą, šiuo metu nėra sistemingo proceso, kaip pasinaudoti Alumni, jų patirtimi ir kontaktais. Ekspertai mano, kad toks tinklas būtų labai vertingas ir padėtų ugdyti dabartinių studentų studijų patirtį daugeliu lygių. Ekspertai siūlo parengti planą ir jį įgyvendinti, siekiant sukurti *dinamiškesnę tinklą*, kuris susietų esamus ir buvusius (ir net potencialius) studentus bei sukurtų ir internetinę platformą, ir ne tik, kad jie galėtų susitikti, bendrauti ir palaikyti ryšį. Siekiant palengvinti šį procesą, ekspertai siūlo įtraukti dabartinius studentus ir Alumni, rengiant tokią iniciatyvą kartu su programos administracija, ir nustatyti geriausius būdus, veiklą ir galimus kanalus tokiam tinklui sukurti.
 7. Ekspertai siūlo įvertinti esamą padėtį dėl dėstytojų praktikų, nes jie yra labai svarbūs programai, tačiau šiuo metu turi mažai paskatų įsitraukti į šią veiklą. Studentai vertina praktinius programos elementus ir nori, kad jų būtų dar daugiau – tai leistų sustiprinti programą. Tačiau dėstytojai praktikai jaučiasi mažai suinteresuoti dėstyti dėl mažo atlyginimo, taip pat nėra kitų formalių privalumų arba pripažinimo, kas pateisintų dideles laiko investicijas į programą. Ekspertai siūlo ieškoti papildomų galimybių *pritraukti praktikoje dirbančius specialistus* dėstyti programos dalykus ir *padaryti tai prioritetu* (pavyzdžiui, suteikti prestižiškesnę formalų statusą ir ieškoti galimybių pasiūlyti didesnę atlyginimą).
 8. Ekspertai rekomenduoja *įdiegti apdovanojimo sistemą už mokslo pasiekimus*: a) *jaunesniesiems personalo nariams* ir (arba) b) pvz., vidaus jaunojo mokslininko apdovanojimą už geriausią pristatytą jaunesniojo fakulteto nario darbą konferencijoje arba paskelbtą žurnale ar kitame leidinyje ir (arba) vidaus apdovanojimą už geriausią akademinį instituto nario straipsnį, paskelbtą *tarptautiniame* recenzuojamame žurnale, ir tai galėtų motyvuoti dėstytojus dar aktyviau užsiimti akademinė leidyba ir siekti daugiau *orientacijos tarptautiniu mastu ir sutelkti dėmesį į mokslinių tyrimų ir publikavimo veiklą*.
 9. Ekspertai rekomenduoja iširti *galimybes dar aktyviau įtraukti socialinius partnerius į programą*. Nors geri kontaktai jau užmegzti, tačiau reikia dar geriau išnaudoti esamą bendradarbiavimą. Pavyzdžiui, keli socialiniai partneriai išreiškė norą dalyvauti *mentoriaus sistemoje*. Be abejo, studentams būtų naudinga tokia sistema ir ekspertai rekomenduoja išnagrinėti daugiau konkrečių variantų kartu su socialinių partnerių grupe

ir dabartiniais studentais, kaip tokia mentorių sistema galėtų atrodyti konkrečiai ir kas norėtų joje dalyvauti.

10. Dėl *socialinių medijų vaidmens studijų programoje* ekspertai pabrėžia, kad svarbu reguliariai peržiūrėti socialinius pokyčius ir žiniasklaidos sistemos dinamiką bei formaliau integruoti naujausias teorines, empirines ir praktines žinias šiuo klausimu į studijų programą, t. y. kaip visų kursų / dalykų sudėtinę dalį ir perspektyvą, ir taip pat, jei įmanoma, kaip pagrindinę paties naujo dalyko temą. Ekspertai mano, kad tokios pastangos yra svarbios ir būtinos, atsižvelgiant į vykstančius sparčius pokyčius tradiciniuose žiniasklaidos ir socialinės žiniasklaidos santykiuose, nes jie turi įtakos žurnalistų profesijai, parodo, ką reiškia būti ir dirbti žurnalistu šiandien ir ateityje. Ekspertai mano, kad ši žurnalistikos mokslinių tyrimų ir praktikos sritis visų pirma turėtų naudoti iš kviestinių specialistų ir mokslinių kviestinių lektorių, siekiant susipėti su naujausiomis tendencijomis šioje sparčiai kintančioje naujoje žiniasklaidos aplinkoje.
11. Ekspertai pabrėžia būtinybę *daugiau dėmesio studijų programoje teikti socialiniams, mokslo kiekybiniais ir kokybiniais tyrimų metodams*, pvz., sukurti *atskirą metodų kursą*, atkreipiant dėmesį, kaip šis kursas yra sudarytas ir dėstomas studentams. Programa turi suteikti studentams žinių ir išmokyti įvairių mokslinių tyrimų metodų, kurie svarbūs rengiant magistro baigiamąjį darbą, o ne tik aptarti tyrimo metodus tik kaip kitų kursų dalį ar palikti juos baigiamojo darbo vadovui, kuris suteiktų žinių apie konkretų metodą kiekvienam studentui atskirai. Bendraudami su studentais ir absolventais ekspertai pažymėjo, kad egzistuoja bendras suvokimas, kad labai daug kas priklauso nuo paskirto vadovo metodų taikymo patirties, kokia pagalba jiems suteikta taikant mokslinių tyrimų metodus, kokia gauta nauda ir net kurį metodą jie taikė savo baigiamajame darbe. Tačiau taip neturėtų būti, kad studentams arba pasisekė, arba ne, priklausomai nuo jiems paskirto vadovo ar ankstesnių žinių apie metodus, įgytų prieš įstojant į šią programą. Ekspertai siūlo *parengti ir į studijų programą įtraukti vieną konkretų kursą, skirtą mokslinių tyrimų metodams* (kuris apimtų kokybinius ir kiekybinius metodus).
12. Dėl šiuo metu labai nedidelio studentų studijuojančių šioje programoje skaičiaus pasirenkamųjų dalykų pasiūla šiuo momentu yra labai ribota. Ekspertai siūlo siūlyti *alternatyvius pasirenkamuosius dalykus, kurie atitiktų studentų interesus ir (arba) profesinį pasirinkimą* ateityje.
13. Ekspertai pažymėjo, kad nuo 2008 iki 2012 metų tik keturi magistrantai paskelbė straipsnių fakulteto žurnale „Žurnalistikos tyrimai“. Ekspertai siūlo tirti dabartinę padėtį ir *sukurti studentų skatinimo sistemą, kad daugiau studentų dalyvautų mokslinių tyrimų veikloje*.
14. Šios programos studentai turi gana skirtingus išsilavinimo pagrindus ir praktinę ar profesinę patirtį. Ekspertai siūlo, kad jei į programą priimami studentai, kuriems trūksta praktinių žurnalistinių įgūdžių arba kurių studijų pagrindai yra daugiau ar mažiau nesusiję su žurnalistika, tokiems studentams papildomai turi būti *numatyti papildomi arba parengiamieji kursai* nepaisant stojamojo egzamino. Taip ekspertai mano todėl, kad svarbu, kad būsimi darbdaviai žinotų, ką šią programą baigę absolventai gali ar ko negali, tačiau jie privalo sukaupti *pagrindinių bendrųjų žinių ir įgūdžių bagažą*. Norint tai pasiekti, programa turi užtikrinti, kad *šią programą baigusiu studentų įgyti gebėjimai labai nesiskirtų*. Į tai reikėtų atsižvelgti jau priėmimo studijuoti pagal programą metu ir apsvarstyti, kaip elgtis vertinant pirminius skirtingus įgūdžius turinčius studentus ir stojančiųjų į programą pagrindus.
15. Ekspertai pažymi, kad reikalingos ir numatytos *investicijos į techninę įrangą ir infrastruktūrą* (pavyzdžiui, radijo studiją, taip pat ir televizijos), kurios anksčiau vėlavusios, šiuo metu vis dėlto vyksta, nepaisant finansinių trukdžių. Įrangos buvimas yra

labai svarbus, siekiant lavinti žurnalistikos studentų praktinius įgūdžius, kuriuos vėliau, tikimasi, jie sugebės pritaikyti praktikoje.

16. Kadangi šiuo metu pagal šią studijų programą studijuojančiųjų yra labai mažai, ekspertai siūlo *skirti daugiau pastangų programos reklamai*, pavyzdžiui: 1) ištirti priežastis, kodėl dabartiniai studentai susidomėjo ir pasirinko šią programą (šis, taip pat ir kiti punktai, gali priklausyti nuo siūlomos studijų programos vertinimo, žr. 1 punktą); 2) įvertinti, kokias dabartiniai studentai mato programos stiprybes ir kokie yra jų lūkesčiai; 3) įvertinti rinkos poreikius ir lūkesčius kartu su socialiniais partneriais; 4) stiprinti ryšius su absolventais, kaip programos ambasadoriais; 5) skirti finansinių investicijų programos rinkodarai, taip pat strategiškai parengti medžiagą, kuri pabrėžtų stipriąsias ir unikalias programos savybes potencialiai suinteresuotiems būsimiems studentams.

<...>

Paslaugos teikėjas patvirtina, jog yra susipažinęs su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)