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Long program description

The Model of Integrative Teaching-and-Studying of Language and CultureDespite the necessity for engineers from various nations and geographical regions to be able to co-operate with each other and be globally mobile, educational programs rarely address this new reality. In general, engineering education does not prepare students for employment outside specific geographical or national regions. The international education for engineering professionals is required due to the integration of engineering practice across geographic and political borders. Therefore, engineering education must be made relevant by both providing students with a command of knowledge–intensive industries through a core curriculum and an awareness of foreign markets and cultures through well–conceived educational exchanges. The Information Age has spawned a borderless culture of e-mail, e-learning and e-commerce, which are further enhancing the mobility and employability of students who are finding that they no longer have to be restricted to their national systems of higher education. Today's European students are more concerned with gaining access to the global job market than they are with perpetuating the divisive traditions associated with nationalism. Europe is as complex as her member states, irrespective of their international affiliations. This complexity also means diversity and applies to all sectors and aspects of human life. Higher education is one of them, for the future of our continent it is among the most important ones. Nowadays, the higher education community all over Europe is chalanged to contribute to the success of the process of reform and convergence to make Europe more attractive and competitive. In addition, there is a clear need to enhance international competitiveness in the overseas student market through the creation of a more viable and unified European system of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilization can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions. Activities in this field include the development of joint curricula for modules and university courses with a "European content", as well as **joint and double degrees** ("double-degree programmes"). If such a programme fulfills certain prerequisites, the Universities Act 2002 also authorises Austrian universities to issue one joint diploma together with the partner institution(s). Special importance is to be be put on the value of the degrees awarded for such programmes (including aspects such as acceptance in the international academic and professional systems, quality assurance, and employability). In this era of globalization, there is a need to study foreign languages and also a need to better understand the cultural and societal context of different countries. The Bologna declaration states: "*A Europe of knowledge is now widely recognized as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competencies to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space.*" The new approach is essentially market-driven: if a particular university does not have what the student is looking for he or she will simply go elsewhere. This applies to both foreign and domestic students. The emergence of new education providers and the increasing recognition of foreign qualifications abroad mean that students are no longer limited to what the universities in their home countries have to offer. The integration of the Bulgarian university civil engineering education into the activities towards unification of the European curricula in this field has already begun in 1999 with the establishment of the common double-degree MSc-program in Hydraulic Engineering between our University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy (UACEG) in Sofia, Bulgaria (the only institution in the country where specialists in the field of hydraulic engineering are trained), and the Vienna University of Technology (TU Wien) from Austria. Now, after several years of intensive and dedicated work on the curriculum concept and contents, exchange of professors and students and tracing the way of this qualitatively new for our countries way of university cooperation through diverse administrative authorities, the first students of this program are to be graduated.The successful development of this double-degree program started still in the time before the Bologna Conference constitutes in fact the best possible base for further development of this bilateral program towards fulfillment of the new requirements to the Civil Engineering education in the European Union in the sense of the Bologna process. The smooth transition of the existing double-degree program to a joint education can be performed easily to ensure retaining the high quality of education together with modern educational technology in the transition phase. This process will naturally have its sound foundation in the already developed rich experience in such international cooperation with the EU-member state university of a high repute as TU Wien. In this connection, the following goals are pursued in the program in the sense of integrated teaching as an important step of the further development of the already well established educational cooperation in the form of a double-degree program towards an integrated joint-degree European program: · Keeping organizing scientific exchange forums like the highly successful Bulgarian-Austrian Seminar on Dam Safety (Sofia, 2003) , Second Bulgarian-Austrian Seminar on Environmental problems in Hydraulic Engineering (Sofia, 2005) and Third Bulgarian-Austrian Seminar on Embankment Dams and Dikes (Sofia, 2007). · Promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance with a view to develop comparable criteria and methodologies. Prepar at ion o n the international level and first steps for development of national structures and activities for performing quality assurance in the higher education and for further join ing the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education- ENQA. · Introduction of the new educational structure of three degrees (bachelor, master and doctor) in compliance with the new Law on Higher Education. · Establishment and improvement of a system of credits — such as in the ECTS system — as proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including life-long

learning, provided they are recognized by receiving universities concerned. · Implementation of the diploma supplements, which are designed to clearly explain completed academic programs to employers and academic administrators in other countries. · For students, access to study and training opportunities and related services. · For teachers, researchers and administrative staff, recognition and valorization of periods spent in European contest researching, teaching and training without prejudicing their statutory rights. Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regard to curricular development, inter-institutional cooperation, mobility schemes and integrated programs of study, training and research can be stated as a long-term goal towards which realization of a CEEPUS program will be a step of crucial importance.

Further information

Planed activities

Student mobility - undergraduates
- Attending lectures,
- Work on graduation papers,
- Participation in the summer school (only if strongly recommended by sending institution)

Student mobility – graduates and postgraduates
- Attending lectures, including regular as part of curricula
- Work on diploma theses
- Work on doctoral theses.
- Participation in the summer school - combined with scientific excursions, educative practice

Teacher mobility
Professors:
- Reading lectures within regular courses, including as part of the existing Double Degree Program
- Participation in discussions on ECTS information packages

Young teaching staff:
- Preparation and collection of teaching materials in the field of Civil Engineering, especially in Hydraulic Engineering and Water Management
- Reading lectures, participation in joint seminars and workshops

Types of instructions planed

lectures
courses
laboratory work
summerschool
assistance with work on a (doctoral) thesis
excursions

Language of instructions planed

english
german